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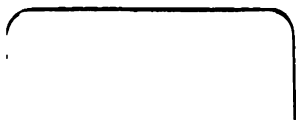
PLEASANT FRUITS

MARIA V. G. HAVERGAL.





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FROM

THE COTTAGE AND THE CLASS.

BY

MARIA V. G. HAVERGAL.



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"HATH NOT GOD
CHOSEN THE POOR OF THIS WORLD,
RICH IN FAITH, AND HEIRS OF THE KINGDOM
WHICH HE HATH PROMISED TO THEM
THAT LOVE HIM."

"BEING FILLED WITH
THE FRUITS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,
WHICH ARE BY JESUS CHRIST, UNTO
THE GLORY AND PRAISE
OF GOD."

"WE BLESS
THY HOLY NAME
FOR ALL THY SERVANTS DEPARTED
THIS LIFE IN THY FAITH AND FEAR;
BESEECHING THEE TO GIVE US GRACE SO TO
FOLLOW THEIR GOOD EXAMPLES, THAT,
WITH THEM, WE MAY BE
PARTAKERS OF
THY HEAVENLY KINGDOM."

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FRUITS OF THE VALLEY.

I.

ALMSHOUSE VISITS.

VERY refreshing and pleasant were the visits to the St. Nicholas Almshouses. It seemed like walking through a corn-field where the golden grain was ripe and ready for the sickle. The following gleanings from the sheaves now safely gathered in, may show the work of God's grace in ripening them for glory.

The Trinity Almshouses were founded in the days of Queen Elizabeth. They are a memorial of her visit to the "faithful city," a royal footprint not yet obliterated. A picture of the Queen still hangs over one of the old passage galleries. On Trinity Mondays, this faded and blackened portrait has fresh evergreens tied round it by the aged women. They loyally subscribe a few pence to gild the laurel leaves, and then indulge in a strong cup of tea, in memory of their good Queen Bess.

The dwelling-rooms are dry and comfortable, and there is a weekly allowance for the support of about fifteen women.

To many a hoary head, these almshouses have been a peaceable habitation and quiet resting-place, after life's rough and weary wanderings.

It is no use to hurry a visit here; there is so much to tell of the past, it is long before the present can be reached. Be "swift to hear," and let them tell the tale of life over and over again; for the patient listener will learn how the poor of this world are "rich in faith." And often deep teachings too will gush out from those who have long been sitting at Jesus' feet, and who are soon going to see Him face to face.

We will go up the narrow staircase and along the open gallery that leads to Ann's door. A box of mignonette smells sweetly, and there are pots of wallflowers and scarlet geraniums, while a fuchsia lives in a favourite old tea-pot. The room is clean and the old oak chairs bright. The chimney shelf contains quite a mosaic variety of curiosities, each having its tale of long ago. An easy chair covered with patchwork, is drawn out for the visitor, and Ann sits down in the old rocking chair, that had hushed many a little crying one.

Two or three morning talks must be given here as one. Ann shall tell her own tale.

"It was my husband's death that first brought me to know the Lord. He was very moral, and what people call a good liver. He was a mighty

man for going to the Cathedral, and seldom missed. Sometimes I went too. I must say the music was heavenly there, but it never went farther than my ears. I suppose it was my ignorance, but it did seem strange to sing about being 'miserable sinners.'

"One night my husband saw the lights in a place of worship, and he turned in to listen. There was a two-edged sword to meet him there. He came home and said,—

"Ann, I have been told to-night all things that ever I did, I am just a sinner, a condemned man.'

"Soon after his illness came on. I was taking him some gruel, and saw his face so full of grief. I said—

"O Jim, what is the matter?"

"Wife, I thought I had been an upright man, but the Lord has held up His glass for me to look in, and my sins seem like a great mountain. Oh, my soul, my soul, is it lost for ever? Kneel down, wife, and pray for me.'

"But I never prayed for myself, how could I for him?"

"From that time the Bible was always in his hand, and it seemed to shine away his darkness. His time was not long. One evening he was leaning against me, and I saw from the change that came over his face, that the message was come for him to go. He sunk, and sunk, till his head rested on my knees. I said,—

"O Jim, is the sin gone?"


“Yes, wife, the mountain is gone, it’s blood that took it away. I see a glorious hill now, it’s there He calls me.’

“A few minutes more and he left me behind, and went to climb it.

“That trouble brought me to my knees. But I was longer wandering in the dark than my poor Jim, and I must have been further off too. One Sunday the 15th chapter of Luke was preached on, and it was a message to me. I came home thinking, ‘Why should not I arise and go to my Father?’ I put my two little ones to bed, and then I went on my knees. The thought came, how the blessed Jesus bowed His head on the cross, that He might fetch them back that were a great way off. I felt I must have Him to fetch me, for I could not stir a step as the prodigal did. For days I felt far, far off. One afternoon I left my needlework, though it was wanted at the shop, and I knelt a long, long time. The load that kept me far off was taken away, for my Saviour came to bring me home. All my grief was turned to joy, He helped me to give Him my rags, and He had got a best robe for me too. I could not praise my dear Saviour enough. I felt I could tell the whole world what He had done for my soul.

“My dear children were great comforts to me. My little girl brought me in a green bough from the hedge, saying—

“Oh, mother, isn’t God good, to send leaves on the bits of sticks.’



"It was a hard struggle to live, but I always had the assurance that the Lord would not let me want. Typhus fever came, and the children and I were all ill together. I pledged my clothes. One evening the medicine bottle was empty, and I knew we must have it filled. I made four journeys to get from my bed to the box. Jim's coat was left; it was very hard to touch that, but I knew he had got the white robe on, and would never be wanting it again. Before I opened the box I just knelt by it, and was saying, 'Thy will be done,' when a knock came at the door. Who should it be but a strange minister's servant! She said—

"It's many years since I saw you, but I heard you were living in the town, and somehow it came over me to-day, I must go and find out where you lived.'

"So I left my Jim's coat in the box, and she soon saw our distress. She went back and told her master, and he sent her again with a basket of potatoes and cold meat. He was a good man, but never having a wife or children, he was not likely to know what fever was. I don't think parsons ever should be single; they can never feel for womankind, as those who have wife and children about them. So I thanked her, and said, that none of us could eat that now, and that I wouldn't be *covetous* and keep it from those that were well and hungry. So she went again, and came back with a one pound note and some eggs. Now, was not that the hand of the Lord?

"And I will tell you that was not the only time He heard my cry before I came to the Amen. Some time after this, we were very *drove*. It was break-fast time; my girl said,—

"‘Mother, what do you put the kettle on for? there is no tea and no bread.’

"‘Never mind, child, the hot water will warm us better than cold; and you and I will kneel down and tell our heavenly Father.’

"A rap at the door, and there was an errand-boy,—

"‘My mistress has sent you two loaves of bread, because the baker’s cart left her more than she wanted.’

"I just felt like Elijah. My Father knew I had no bread, and He saw my heart was too honest to send for what I could not pay for. Could I ever doubt Him again, when His blessed eye watched over my wants. Satan often came to tempt me when bread and work were short, but I had always this to silence him with. I can’t read a word, but it is surprising what Scripture comes into my mind. My children read the Bible while I worked for them, and I learnt a good many passages. It is a long time since those days of troubles, but you see the Lord has led me all the way, and He won’t leave me now. And then, He gave me this room, it will be the last I shall want till mine is ready in His mansions. I lie awake a long time, and then I pray to the Holy Spirit to bring me a verse, and He does. I know He does work on the mind, for I

have proved it many years. Yes, He does speak, and I think He has brought me into this quiet corner, that I may have more time to listen. It is the voice to the heart that I love best now, and He does speak. I look round on the empty chairs sometimes, then I think of where they are sitting now, and that there will be no empty chairs in heaven. And my blessed Jesus comes so near me, and He fills all the room. Sometimes two or three of the Lord's people come in, and then we read and pray together. But I am never without His company, and that is the best of all. I was always fond of singing, and in my poor way, I go through some hymns I know. But soon He will be teaching me, and how shall I sing then?"

Our next visit is to a dying one, Mrs. Amphlett. There is no mistaking who she means as she whispers, "Precious, precious!"

"What promise gives you comfort now?"

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—me, me."

After reading to her Psalm xxiii., she whispered,—

"No sting, no fear, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

Some of her neighbours came in. She motioned to the one she loved best, Elizabeth Sherwood, to come near, saying, "Come in, thou child of God."

One of them saying, "Poor Mrs. A., I hope you will be better soon," she answered, "Don't call me poor, he who has Christ can't be poor; don't

wish me to be better, dear; would you hinder me from my kingdom?"

The next visit was the last, one Sunday evening. Sweeter than the chiming bells were her farewell words. "Glory, glory," was her constant cry. Repeating to her Deut. xxxiii. 27, "Underneath are the everlasting arms," her full commentary was, "One arm is mercy, the other arm is love, and they are underneath *me*."

And yet she longed for more, not only to feel His arms, but to see Himself, and so she called, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." And before that Sabbath closed to us, she passed away into the endless Sabbath above.

The next visit is far from being pleasant, were it not for the simple-minded talk of the old widow Evans, who is sitting there as nurse to poor Ann.

For many years Ann pretended to be a Protestant, and as such received the visits and alms of our Church. Lately she has declared that she has always believed in the Holy Catholic Church of Rome.

Ann. "It is a long time since you called, Miss, I thought you had forsaken me."

"The last time I came, you said you liked the priest's visits best, Ann; but I heard you were ill, and so called."

"Yes, I am ill; going as fast as I can go; O Lord, help me."

"Do you really want the Lord to help you, Ann,

for you told me you thought the Virgin Mary could help you just as well?"

"Yes, I do say 'Hail Mary;' isn't hers a powerful name?"

"There is nothing in the Bible about the name of Mary, but we read there that the Lord Jesus said, 'All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.' Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. And the Lord told His disciples, 'If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.'"

Poor Ann seemed sleepy and did not answer, but her nurse, widow Evans, said,—

"Ay, that's the name. I am a poor ignorant sinner, but I know that Jesus is the only name they call in heaven, and it's enough for me. I am humbly thankful to you, Miss, for teaching me the only hymn I know,—

'How sweet the name of Jesus sounds.'

I haven't got it perfect, though I do put up my thumb for Shepherd, and the other names run on my fingers, but I haven't got my Tom, my jewel, to help me out with it now."

"I see that Ann is gone to sleep, Evans, so will you like to tell me about your poor Tom?"

"Yes, Miss, I do like to tell of him, for my heart is always talking about my Tom, my jewel. I never look up to the sky, but I think his shadow is among the clouds, but it's too far off for me to reach. I

was quite a young girl at service when we lighted on one another, and our two hearts never came apart till his stopped beating.

"I was dairy-maid at P—— Court. My mistress was very notable in her dress; she turned the last maid away, because, when she gave her a new dress, she scauffed it all up into flounces, and she said she would never have such pomps and vanities in her kitchen.

"The first time I came down to go to market, mistress met me on the stairs. She had a mighty way of putting her hands behind her when she was pleased, and back they went,—

"'Well now, Betty, you do look nice. You can look the parson in the face when you say the Catechism in church, and get through the "pomps and vanities" with a clean conscience.'

"I had on a brown stuff, a Holland pinafore, and the bib full up to my chin. I had a close bonnet on, and asking your pardon, Miss, not like the bare-faced ones now-a-days. I have heard mine called a coal-scuttle shape. The biggest change in the world since my young days is the paltriness about dress. It all comes of young ladies going off to them long places, Paris for one, that's full of grandeur, and the first time they come back to their church, their bonnets are more thought of than the sermon. My poor mistress was the best fashioned dresser that ever I saw, though she had plenty of money to buy flounces. She had plenty of trouble

too, for her husband died, and her two sons and her daughter all went melancholy like. She would not send them to the lunatics, but got some strait waistcoats to keep them in, comfortable like. Poor young things! it's well that the Lord's and a mother's heart loves their own, in or out of their senses. (I've heard that read at church, about the lunatics, that they were brought to Jesus.) They all died, and she and her money were left alone, till there came a man that *lighted* her."

"What do you mean, Evans?"

"Why, when a man marries a woman for her money, it's like a crow pouncing down on the corn, and lightening the stalks of their grain, till they are bare. It was a pity, for she hadn't her equal for neatness and notableness.

"I suppose it was my stuff gown that took Tom's fancy; anyway, he got very partial to me, and asked me if I could marry him.

"From our wedding-day never a cross word passed between us, for, if he said yes, I never said no. We rented a cottage on the mistress's farm. It was alongside of an orchard, and the apples grew thicker and bigger than the stars in the sky. I used to wonder if the apples that tempted Eve could be redder, till our parson said in a sermon he didn't think it was apples at all. But he didn't seem to know what it was, so I kept my own mind about it.

"Those were happy days with my poor Tom, my

jewel. I can hear his whistle now ; no one ever whistled like him. The larks might have took pattern by his tunes.

“For many years no trouble came to our door, but trouble is the right road to the kingdom, and so ours came—still I had my Tom. We were hand in hand, and parted all our troubles equal like. The mistress died ; we had to leave our cottage, and one trouble came after another, till my poor Tom was taken from me. He was ill a long time with what they called the palsy. I used to comfort him with saying—

“‘Tom, my jewel, it’s the Lord Jesus shook hands with both your hands, and He’s just left you a shaking token behind Him.’

“I can’t bear to talk of that time, but I never knew till then there was one Name sweeter than my poor Tom’s.

“I never was up to Tom in the learning. I am a poor ignorant creature and have no gifts like him, but I do pray for the Holy Spirit to enlighten me, and keep me in the right road. I go in the little back room there to think of His love and to cry at His feet.

“It’s a help to me to come and nurse this poor neighbour, for I have only the parish pay. I do all I can for poor Mrs. C——. I lay her as sweet as a violet every morning. I wish she hadn’t left the right road, following them priests instead of the Lord Jesus Christ. I was here when our dear clergyman Mr. H—— called, and he laid it all before her as

clear as a glass of water. I know it touched my heart and made the tears flow, to hear him discourse on our dear Saviour, and what a good priest He was. She's having a long sleep now, I hope you will call and reason with her about it."

"Did you enjoy the tea party at the schoolroom, Evans?"

"That I did, Miss, and we were treated just like kings and queens; and the music was so meritable. It illuminifed me till I thought it brought the light of heaven down to us. , I had only one thought—that I'd like to hear dear Miss Fanny and the ladies sing to me again in heaven, for then my Tom, my jewel, would be listening along with me."

Another of that evening's aged guests thus spoke of their feast on January 4th in the schoolroom—

"That was a pleasant evening; it was months since I had taken tea with any one. And as I watched them hobbling in on their crutches and sticks, I thought it was like bringing the prisoners out of the prison, and the hidden ones out of their holes and corners. It made me sink to the earth to think such vile wretched ones as we should be so remembered. But I traced all our enjoyment that evening to the overflowings of His love. He was the spring, for He put it in His people's heart to remember their poor neighbours.

"The crowning privilege was His presence. I summed up all that evening's enjoyment in three words 'God is love.'"

We pass on to another door and knock.

"Come in, come in. I am so glad you are come, for I was trying to find last Sunday's text and could not. It does so vex me that I can't remember my precious minister's sermons as I used to. I always take that verse in Solomon's Song, 'The voice of the turtle is heard in our land,' to mean the minister's voice in the sermons. I am sure ours is like the turtle dove's call. I've always found it good to sit under dear Mr. Havergal, many's the time he has fed my poor soul. I always look up to see who is going in the pulpit, and if it's not him my heart sinks. I know I ought to welcome all; but he never gives us dry crusts, and what he says comes so to my heart. My dear precious minister, how lively he comes among us, I know his step from any one's. I hope he will be the instrument to turn many to the Lord. I do pray for him; will you tell him so?"

"Indeed, I will, Surman, it is a great comfort to God's ministers to feel that their people pray for them. You seem very happy this morning."

"Yes, that I am, and I would not give up my happiness for all the world could give. Time was when I felt burdened, but now no heaviness stays with me, though of course it does rise sometimes."

"And what do you do with it?"

"I put it all on Christ; isn't He able to bear it? He has long carried my loads, takes them all on His dear self. And it's the same with temptations; the tempter can't go further than the length of his

chain. My Saviour has long been my precious friend; it is many years I have walked with Him. I'll tell you what I would not to any stranger. What pleasant talks I have with my precious Saviour! He comes so near to me, and does manifest Himself in a way I can't tell you. May you know it yourself, my dear, and that will strengthen you to work for Him. Your work is not done, mine is; though I take every opportunity of speaking a word for Him."

"Have you often such opportunities?"

"I take all that comes, don't pick and choose them. The other day I got as far as where I could see a harvest field. A gentleman was standing there too, so I said—'I am thinking, Sir, how this field is like the day of judgment, when the Lord will come to gather the wheat into His barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.' But he turned on his heel and went away. So I prayed for him and learnt the lesson for myself. I always did like looking at God's lessons up in the trees and down in the fields. Once I remember seeing a field of wheat, and bright scarlet poppies growing along with it. And the wind came and blew, and they all bent together, the wheat and the poppies. I thought that's just like believers and professors, growing together, bowing in the same worship, bending to the same God; some making a finer talk than a poor Christian, but the poppies won't be took up into the garner. But I am talking so long, Miss, and now I want the reading."

“What chapter shall we read, Surman?”

“I should like that one in the Song of Solomon, where he says, ‘Arise, my love, and come away.’”

So verse by verse we read the 2d chapter of the Song of Solomon.

And this poor widow had the key to the Song of Songs, and very plain and sweet were her comments on each verse. And she spoke as one who, while she learnt, was also leaning on the Beloved.

Another time I asked her if she wanted any clothing.

“No, I want for nothing, the Lord provides for all my needs. I think I’m like Elijah fed by the ravens, for first one and then another neighbour brings me a bit. And your dear mother, she never forgets me, look what she made with her own hands; tell her she has my prayers, and tell her how I liked my precious minister’s lovely sermon on Good Friday. He did explain to us about the cross of Jesus and His love in bearing it; it melted my heart quite. I can truly say my soul is profited by Mr. Havergal’s preaching; my memory is got so shallow that I’m glad to hear all I can.”

When the Church Missionary Sermons were preached Surman always cheerfully gave her mite. She said,—

“I longed to put more in His plate, but I had only sixpence in my little store; I wished I had more to give Him, my dear God and Master. I wish all the poor blacks could know what a precious Saviour Christ is. I often think, Why did He choose and

call me, when others are cut down in sin, and I, a rebel, brought to Him and saved with everlasting salvation. And to think of the end and of the glory coming to me then!"

Surman told me of a young friend in whose spiritual growth she took much interest.

"That dear child has called to see me again. It is quite wonderful how the Lord is teaching her. See how He waters His young plants. She said to me, 'I would sooner have both my arms chopped off, than lose my hope in Christ.'"

These "holy women" in the almshouse were often most helpful to young visitors, who were just beginning to seek the better part. There was such reality in what they said of the preciousness of the Lord Jesus as their living Saviour, the brother, friend, with whom they held sweet communion. It gave them opportunity to say a word in season, and I could tell of real blessing, real help Zionward, being the result of such visits. Often too, have their words cheered and encouraged me and taught me many a lesson, I learnt nowhere else so well.

Only one more visit must be recalled.

"Good morning, Surman, I am so glad to come and see you again."

"It does seem a long time since you went to Ireland; I thought I should never hear your knock at my door again. But here I am, still far from home, yet every night I think, Now it's one day nearer. And when I wake I think, There I've got over more of my journey without knowing it. I

should like to know about their religion in Ireland ; they don't think as we do."

"No, Surman, they do not keep to the lamp of God's word. Christ is not 'all' to them ; it would make you sad to hear them talk of their trust in the Virgin and her intercessions for them. I will tell you what a Roman Catholic said to me, when I had been speaking to her about the Lord Jesus ever living to intercede for us.

"That's not our belief, Miss, there's no help for us but through the Blessed Mother of God ; wasn't she without spot or stain, and ordained for ages before to be the mother of God ? Oh, Holy Mary, Queen of heaven, I adore thee. Didn't her Son say, 'All power is given to my mother in heaven and in earth ?' isn't she pleading for me, and her Son daren't deny her anything ? If it was not for her intercession, the wicked would be cut off, it's for her sake they are spared. I tell you, Miss, if an angel from heaven came and told me, the Holy Virgin wasn't at God's right hand interceding for me, I would not believe him. Sure the devils tremble at her name, she rules over the one half of heaven. God the Father is first, and Mary is next to Him. Oh, Holy Mary, I adore thee, I love thee, and I'll never trust in any other."

"Oh, dear, dear, poor thing ! how could a woman save a woman ? The Virgin never shed her blood, and so has no right to intercede."

"That is just it, Surman. St. Paul says (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6), 'One mediator between God and man, the

man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself a ransom for all.' He who paid the ransom alone can plead it."

Surman.—"I wish I could tell her how Christ is my 'all in all,' my precious all. He is interceding for me, and there's my joy to be 'accepted in the beloved.' Then they don't rest on the promises as I do?"

"No, Surman, God's word is hid from them, and so they can't meditate in it day and night as you do. Were you thinking of any promise last night?"

"When I woke in the night, the thought woke with me how the Lord took Eve and 'brought her unto the man.' It seemed to me such a sweet resemblance of the Church being given to the Lord Jesus. I can't tell you how bright it pictured the Lord's love to me. How He chose me to be His, and then won't He come and fetch me home, and present me faultless before His throne? I have known what an earthly husband is, but there's none like my heavenly Husband. Yes, He is mine, He chose me from all eternity, and that's why I chose Him. Are we not bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh, and doesn't He feed me daily with this life? Oh, what an arm I've found His to lean on. I shan't be always a weak creature here, grappling with the world, the flesh, and the devil. I shall get out of the enemy's gunshot soon. I can't see to read the chapter with you to-day, but I am ready for it"

The 26th of Isaiah was chosen; at the 4th verse,

"Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength," she remarked, "Yes, I have it, that's the Rock of Ages, Moses smote it, and 'that Rock was Christ.' And that stream flows on to me. I shall be drinking of it all my journey.

"You must ask my dear precious pastor to remember me in his prayers. What should we poor old women do without his visits? I know his step from the hundreds that go by my door. And please to thank dear Mrs. H—— for her kind present. Oh, what kind friends the Lord sends me!"

Would that such visits could be recorded of all the almshouse inmates! But it is ever the "few" from among the "many" that know the Lord. There were the self-righteous ones, who would reckon up many items of goodness. There were their good characters, and the good families they had lived in, their constant church goings, and their never doing any harm to their neighbours. They were very comfortable in their minds, and quite sure that such respectable, upright, good liver as themselves never need think of hell; besides, God was very merciful. It seemed like turning over and admiring their filthy rags, and heaping on one after another, choosing rags, rejecting the King's wedding garment.

And there were others groping in the dark, yet thankful to hear of the light. One was most thankful for her young visitor's weekly call, and

great were her lamentations if "our dear Miss F." was away. Ann would say, "I can't read myself, so she and her books are always welcome. I do grieve that I am no scholar, but I get to my prayers in my poor way. I pray that the Lord will enlighten me, and put His Holy Spirit in me,—that He will open my dark eyes, and save my sinful soul; it's all in my poor ignorant way, but it's sweet, too, to think of the blood spilt for me."

Passing by many doors, we knock at one on which might be written, "A disciple whom Jesus loves." The narrow staircase is clean, and the room is dustless. On the table, with green baize cover lies the well-worn Bible, the lamp to her path, and by it the spectacle-case, on which is worked, "Open thou mine eyes." A few flowers are in a glass, and some plants in the window-seat—all is order in this quiet room. Gladly we turn in hither, tired and discouraged, it may be, with the morning's work. It quite rests you to look at Elizabeth's calm, happy face. Her forehead is high, and her intelligent eye beams with the peace that "passeth all understanding." A crutch lies by her chair, for long ago her leg was amputated. It is always refreshing to sit down by Elizabeth, and listen and learn. Many of the deep things of God have been revealed to her by the Spirit. We can only scantily recall from imperfect notes some of her remarks on many passages of Scripture.

Deut. xxxiii. 12, "The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover

him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.”—“How large this promise is. I think believers are the exemplification of it, for they are the beloved of the Lord. Their dwelling-place implies such a nearness to the Lord, even to His heart; and then what a strong abiding place it must be on His shoulders. ‘The government shall be on His shoulder,’ and that also is where He lays the lost sheep. (Luke xv. 5.) And all this blessedness is but commenced here; what will the reality be? The world may despise those who are so beloved of the Lord, but the world’s scorn is the Christian’s badge of honour.”

Ps. cxxx. 3, “If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, *who* shall stand?”—“The Lord *did* mark it, but it was marked in our substitute. This is very comforting when the mind views its own deficiency and failings; not a thing I wish to do, but evil is present with me. Then I try to behold the life and obedience of my Saviour for me; not only dying, but living for me, obedient to the whole law for me. Then viewing His deity, I see the infinite worth of this obedience in my nature, as my kinsman. Therefore what He fulfilled in my nature, becomes my infinite righteousness. But there must be a full taking of Christ. The other night, when I was thinking of this, I said, ‘Yea, Lord, I take all just as a beggar; I have nothing to bring to Thee; oh, let me lie the lowest, and yet take the fulness of Thy love.’”

January 1.—Elizabeth told me that her New

Year's portion was, "Thou art the same;" remarking, "What a depth of infinite unchangeable comfort is here. The 'same,' His bosom ever the same for me to lean on. The 'same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.' The 'same' in nature, in love, in faithfulness. Earthly friends are not always the 'same,' and sometimes, when you long for them most, they leave you. Like your dear father's going, it is such a bitter trial to me. I heard his step in our yard yesterday in all that pouring rain, and I thought, Your life is too precious to be out in such a wet day. I have found such rich gleanings while listening to his sermons, such soul-refreshing pastures; but though my earthly shepherd goes, Jesus is the 'same.'"

February 10.—"What passage of Scripture have you been thinking of, Elizabeth?" "For two or three days the words, 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father' (John xiv. 9), have been a feast to me. I seemed to gain a glance into the mystery of the Godhead, the unity of the persons. The attributes of the Father revealed in the Son, the glory of the Father shining in the face of Jesus Christ; therefore, 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.' And this revealed unto us by the Spirit of truth. There is fathom upon fathom in the word. I seem to see one depth after another, and yet never reach the deepest. Oh, how all this is missed by those who only carelessly read through a chapter, without searching into its depths.

"Another word has struck me in Eph. i. 22.

'Gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church.' The word 'things' seemed to reveal to me so much of His providential headship. Things, that is, occurrences, minute arrangements, our everyday little things. He is the disposing Head of all things that affect His Church. Therefore my faith finds a resting place when I see all my little things are under His control. Often a little word seems to open to me the secrecy of His mind, and we know 'the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him,' and to them He opens the secret treasures of His word."

Easter Monday.—Elizabeth looked happier than ever. She said, "I had such a breakfast, Easter morning. I woke very early, and these words came with power to my mind, 'I am the Resurrection and the Life.' 'The Life,' that is, my inner life here, (putting her hand on her heart). Dead once, but now alive in Christ, risen with Him. The knowledge of this seems to multiply all my mercies. I so enjoyed your dear father's sermon on Good Friday. (Genesis xxii. 18.) The Lamb the substitute for me. And he told us of all that was provided for the followers of the Lamb, the feast, the white robe, the living fountains of water. That same evening I had such an overwhelming sense of the dying love of the Lamb of God, I could only cover my face, as if gazing on the cross, and cry, 'Enough, enough; enough for justice, enough for Thee; Lord, enough for me.'"

Having introduced Elizabeth by these stray

gleanings, we will now copy her Autobiography, which she had neatly written in two copy-books.

ELIZABETH'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

I was born in a village near Worcester. My parents brought me up to attend to the outward forms of religion. At an early age I went to service. I was moral and sedate, endeavouring by such conduct to gain the esteem of those I served in being faithful and honest. Previous to my afflictions I was looking forward for years to come with the prospect of much pleasure in life. But in a short time it pleased the Lord to disappoint my vain hopes, by visiting me with a painful lameness in my knee. One day I got my feet wet, and sat down with them so ; a cold followed, and rheumatic pains. An abscess formed in my knee, and for months I lay ill. This was a great grief to me, and caused me to have hard thoughts of the Lord. Little did I then think that that affliction was to work for my good. I sought aid from many physicians, but all proved in vain. The lameness still increased, and in a few months I was compelled to leave my situation in hope that rest would do me good. I then had a dangerous attack of small-pox. I thought I was like Job, but I knew not the God of Job. The disease in my knee increased, and I lay in a most distressed state. It pleased God to direct His highly honoured servant, Rev. — Lake, to visit me. This was in the year 1808. He read to me the third chapter of John, and spoke to me faith-

fully of the need of the new birth. I then related to him a long and dismal tale of my sufferings. His reply was, "If there was no sin there would be no sorrow." This caused the enmity of my heart to rise, and I thought, "Does he think me such a great sinner? He cannot know what a good character I have always borne." My life had been so precise and blameless that my proud heart revolted at being told I must be born again. My sickness continued, and my circumstances became so reduced that every mite of charity was welcomed. My kind clergyman called again and laid two shillings on my pillow. This convinced me that he had my welfare at heart, however sinful he deemed me, and that he had some motive for visiting me to which I was a stranger, and this softened me. Let this encourage visitors to the sick to go on showing kindness. He requested me to read John iii. and Romans viii. But I was determined I would not. He sent Christian friends to visit me, but I was so sullen and reserved, and so determined not to answer any question, that they conversed to each other. I was much surprised to hear these good people say that if they had what they deserved they would be in hell. I wondered what sort of characters these good people could be, and thought they must have committed some enormous crimes. Finding I was so reserved and sullen, these friends concluded there was no prospect of being useful to me, and gave up visiting me. But the Lord did not give me up. An aged Christian called upon me. My heart was

opened to attend to what he said. He entered into the state of mankind by nature. He proved from Scripture that all had broken His holy law, in thought, word, and deed, and come short of the glory of God. He asked me what was man's chief end, and explained what it was to live for God's glory here and then enjoy Him for ever. I felt an utter stranger to the idea of living for God's glory. He then went on describing the state we were brought into by the fall, and clearly showed me what original sin was. And here my mountain of self-righteousness fell. I can compare my mind to a person suddenly opening the shutter of a dark room. I saw that I too was fallen, sinful, lost, on the brink of hell. Although I knew it not, that was being fulfilled, "When he is come, he will convince the world of sin." For, oh, what a discovery I had of my life and conduct in the sight of a holy God! Now I saw I had never done anything to the glory of God, but self was my highest object. I saw the exceeding darkness and wickedness of my heart, and where to look I knew not.

I had been praying for death to get rid of my pain, but now I felt terrified at the thought, and yet could see nothing else before me. I prayed as well as I could, and longed to see this friend again, but I was left of man, and from that time no human instrument had ought to do with the work. Necessity obliged me to go into the Infirmary, where I was visited no more. Blessed be the Lord, when He begins a good work He will perfect it.

The surgeon found he could do nothing to save my life but remove my limb. I sunk at the very idea of this, and feared I should die under the operation, and then hell would be my portion. I knew not where to look for comfort. But the Lord's tender mercies are over all His works, and the surgeon under whose care I was placed often gave me a word of comfort or instruction, though he knew not the state of my mind. The time drew near for the day of operation to be appointed, and on my surgeon saying, "Let me fix Monday," I burst into tears at the thought of dying. The surgeon was very sorry for me and put it off a day or two.

Bowed down and heavy laden, I opened my Bible and read that gracious invitation in Matt. xi. 28, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I thought, My load is so very heavy, still there was the word, "Come unto me," and at last it reached my heart. I cried, Lord, help me to come, show me what it is to come. Then the Holy Spirit enabled me to cast my burden upon the Lord, which gave me a peace I never had before. Then I was led to meditate on the boundless love and compassion of the Lord Jesus, the Sinner's Friend. Another day I was in such a spirit of prayer I could find no words, and knew not how it was till I read Rom. viii. 26, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." I still had

fear all was not right with me, remembering what my visitors often said, "You must be born again." As I had no one to instruct me, my only resource was to cry unto the Lord, my only Teacher, that He would show me what it was to be born again, and not suffer me to deceive myself. I read the 3d of St. John. When I read the verse, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit," this seemed so clear to me, that I was filled with joy and peace in believing, and said, "It is enough."

Instead of trembling at the sight of my surgeon, now I longed to see him, and felt ready for the operation. He appointed the next day. Oh! what a happy night I passed; promises of God's word came like a calm breeze to my mind. I longed for the morning to tell my doctor how willing I felt to go through it all. The nurse came to prepare me. I said, "Only cover my eyes." As I lay waiting to be carried to the operating room, I said to myself, "Is it possible I am so calm, so quiet, not a fear? surely it is the Lord." I was laid on the operating table. The operation lasted three-quarters of an hour, and was very severe, the amputation being far above the knee-joint (and no chloroform known then). I seemed lying in the arms of Jesus, as if He came between me and that sharp knife. I had so much of His presence that I was lifted up above my sufferings, painful though they were. I

felt in the Lord's hands, willing that He should do with me what seemed good in His sight. How precious Jesus was to me in that trying hour I cannot find words to express. I saw clearly that all my sins were blotted out through His precious blood. I could not help exclaiming before the surgeons—

“ Though my sins as mountains rise,
And swell and rise to heaven,
Yet mercy is above the skies,
And I shall be forgiven.”

When I was laid again on my bed, I could not help singing—

“ Such is Jesus,
Such is grace,
I long to see Him
Face to face.”

During the succeeding night, though suffering much pain, my heart was lifted up with gratitude and praise to God for His boundless mercies to one so unworthy. When sufficiently recovered I left the infirmary. My much esteemed surgeon presented me with a Bible.

I returned to my parents in the country. Everything appeared new to me, and I felt a desire to tell every one to seek the Lord.

I had still much pain to suffer, and also some persecution, but the Lord was my refuge and strength. As soon as I was able I went to live in Worcester, and endeavoured to earn my living by needlework. How I longed for Sunday to come

to hear the gospel. The first sermon I heard was by Mr. Lake, from Phil. i. 6, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." This word seemed like a staff to lean upon, and has often been a comfort to me in dark seasons.

How good it is to go up to the house of the Lord, that He may teach us of His ways, and according to His word, "faith cometh by hearing." I cannot express how, when burdened with afflictions of mind and body, *the word* became a blessing to my soul. I found great comfort at this time in Psalm x. 7, "My defence is of God, who saveth the upright in heart." Truly I found the Lord faithful to His promise, "that they who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."

At times I was harassed with the thought, I had not been brought in the right way, not having experienced such convictions of sin as some others. This led me to cry, "Search me, O God, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any way of wickedness in me." The Lord was pleased to comfort me by Isaiah xxvii. 8, "He stayeth his rough wind in the day of his east wind." He helped me to rest upon Him, and I proved the preciousness of His word, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." When bereft of every earthly comfort, this verse was delightful to me, "Who thall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" (Rom. viii. 33.)

Soon my happiness was to be mixed with a bitter cup. I had thought much of the words in 1 Peter i. 11, 12, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you." I prayed much the Lord would prepare and make me willing for whatever trial He saw best for me. My surgeon informed me it was necessary for me to go into the infirmary again, to undergo a second operation. My greatest sorrow was in knowing I should be deprived of the ordinances of the Lord's house. I felt it a hard struggle till the words in Exodus xiv. 13 comforted me, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." Then I could say—

"O Lord, my best desires fulfil,
And help me to resign
Life, health, and comfort to Thy will,
And make Thy pleasure mine."

It proved needful that the operation should be performed. When passing through the waters the Lord was with me, and enabled me to repose in Him. During the amputation, and when the instrument pierced through my flesh, I was led to reflect on the sufferings of Christ. I dwelt on the wondrous transactions of Calvary; and, whether in the bitter draught, or the extreme pain, all reminded me of Him that was wounded for my transgressions. When He drank the bitter cup, He drank all the wrath of God for my sins. The joy unspeakable I then felt, words cannot express. It seemed almost too much for my weak body to bear.

For more than seven months I lay ill in the

infirmity. During part of this time, I learnt another lesson. The Lord was pleased to hide His face from me. My bodily afflictions also increased, and, to all appearance, I was drawing near the gate of death, and I was left in darkness. It was suggested to my mind, all had been a delusion. Friends asked me how I was ; my reply was, Christ is gone. Still I cried unto the Lord in my distress, and read my Bible. Often did I beg my attendant in the night to read to me the 54th chapter of Isaiah, as the 11th verse gave me a little comfort.

My distress increased and my sufferings also. I thought I was about to be launched into an unknown world, that I was the chief of sinners, and not a hope of mercy. I begged the nurse to fetch me some Christian friend. She did so ; and I would say, for the encouragement of those who visit the sick, that the Lord was pleased to come with that visitor. My visitor patiently listened to all I had to say, and then answered, "The Lord is teaching you to walk by faith, and not by sight. Your salvation is Christ's finished work. He rests in His love to us, and would teach us poor needy sinners to stay ourselves on Him." She read to me the 6th chapter of Hebrews. Never shall I forget the preciousness of the 17th verse : "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath : that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled

for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." In His great mercy, the Lord blessed this word, that it proved an anchor to my soul, both sure and steadfast.

For some time, I lay in a very weak state; for a fortnight I could take no food and had no sleep; even my doctor was astonished to see me live on from day to day. I revived a little, but all hope of doing anything more for me was given up, and when able I was removed to my parents. There I entered into the meaning of that Scripture, "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee."

After a few months I recovered sufficiently to return to Worcester. Again I found the ministry of His Word most blessed. I learnt many lessons: the fallen guilt of my nature—the all-sufficiency and grace of the Lord Jesus—His imputed righteousness the covering for my naked guilty soul—that whether living or dying I was His.

At this time symptoms of dropsy appeared, and the complaint much increasing, change into the country was ordered me. The heart of one of His servants was inclined to receive me into his house. Here I had every comfort provided for me. Feeling my unworthiness, I reflected that all these mercies were laid up for me in my covenant Head, the Lord Jesus. I cannot describe the beauty I saw in that verse, (Hosea ii. 19): "I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies." What a blessing thus

to enjoy the manifestations of His love, to sit at His feet and learn of Him.

January 1822.—I have this day proved so much of the tender compassion of that "Friend who sticketh closer than a brother," that I cannot help setting up this waymark. I had been overwhelmed with sorrow, so that I could not help weeping. Before I opened my Bible, the Lord applied this word with such power to my soul, that I sat down astonished with the suitability of His promises. Jer. xxxi. 16: "Refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears, for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord." For a moment I could not tell where it was, but soon found it. I was so overcome with a sense of His loving kindness, that I fell at His feet to praise Him, casting all my care on Him. "O God, the Lord, the strength of my soul, thou hast covered my head in the day of battle." In this I discovered a covenant God, who is all my strength, and who is engaged to support, comfort, and shield me in every danger, and finally bring me through more than conqueror. I find it an unspeakable blessing to have a living Friend and Saviour, to whom I can tell all my wants. If I had all the angels of heaven, and all the saints upon earth, what would that be if I had not Jesus? Well may I say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

January 1823.—Having experienced much of my Heavenly Father's care through the past year,

I wish to put up another waymark. Many times has He appeared for me, when no other hand could help. Like the children of Israel, my way was shut up, and then He made a way for me, and gave drink to my needy soul. One time I remember being overpressed with difficulties, and pouring out my heart before Him, that one word Jehovah-Jireh gave me strong confidence, that whatever He saw best He would provide for me. Thus I have proved, through this year, that "the Lord is good, and a stronghold in the day of trouble."


January 1826.—In the Infirmary.—This has been a year of very great mercies and wonderful support. Often have enemies without impeded my journey heavenward, together with a poor, weak, afflicted body. But I have not sunk, because God was my support, and underneath were the everlasting arms. Thanks be to Him who has given me a daily victory. The changes I have passed through have taught me the uncertainty of all things here, that this is not my rest, but that there is a rest where sin and sorrow cannot enter. When the past year commenced, I was surrounded with Christian friends, and enjoying the privileges of the Lord's house. But it was the same love that laid His rod again upon me and bid me leave all these comforts and take up my abode in this hospital, where I am surrounded with poor fellow-sufferers. Alas! their chief concern seems to be to harden each other in sin. Never did I loathe vain conversation as now. What proofs do I see of the hardness of the human

heart. Some repining under their pains, no fear of God before their eyes, others crying out under the pangs of a guilty conscience and the pains of death. Oh, how thankful I am, that amidst all these things the Lord Jesus is to me "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever!" I have indeed been brought by a way which I knew not, but by the right way to perfect peace and rest. For the last seven years I had been teaching some children in a little day-school, and was much attached to them and to the many kind friends who ministered to my wants. Now I was cut off from all these. His thoughts are not our thoughts, and though at first I was perplexed, this word silenced and comforted me, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."

January 18.—I am now entered upon another year of my heavenward pilgrimage. Never did I more feel my need of Jesus, never was He so precious to me as at this time, when completely shut out from all the means of grace and all intercourse with Christian friends. Sickness and disease are raging around me in these wards, but I have Christ for my refuge—my source of happiness—to whom I can tell all my wants. Since I wrote, last January, I returned home, and again went to the courts of the Lord, "sitting down under his shadow with great delight." Again I was in the midst of a Christian family. My heart was often filled with such praise for my mercies, that I could not sleep at night. But these comforts were of short duration, and my disease compelled me again to return to the

infirmary. This was a dark cloud, because I had no word from the Lord. I could only watch and cry unto Him, who had hitherto prepared all things for me. My own weakness is so great, that I can only suffer as I am supported by Almighty power. He sees best to keep me in the dark. It is a trial of my faith, to cast out my anchor even in the dark, to throw myself upon Christ, believing that He sees me toiling in rowing. When it shall be for His glory, He will make known His will to me. It reconciles me to see so many ways in which I can be kind to my fellow sufferers and reason with them, and tell them of a refuge in the Sinner's Friend. It may be for this I am sent here, and if I may but glorify Thee, Thy will be done. O grant me Thy presence. Grant me strength to glorify Thee, day by day. Make me in any way conformable to Thee, whether by suffering, or by whatsoever Thou deemest best for me. Let me not faint in the day of adversity.

The time drew near when I must again undergo a very sharp operation. I had a very great dread of it, but the goodness of the Lord again supported me. I had but faint hope of the means being successful, yet, if the Lord commanded it, I would go, as it were, with a "Nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net." Just at the crisis of the operation and my necessity, that verse, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities," was much comfort to me. I felt such a giving up of myself to Him that I lost sight of the pain.



After this, every day seemed to increase my trials. Still, Jesus Christ is to me "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Yes, He supported me yesterday, He will not leave me to-day; so that I may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper." O precious Saviour! to me a compassionate high priest, touched with the feeling of my infirmities, knowing the weakness of my flesh "who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up strong cryings and tears to him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared," didst Thou thus suffer and die for me? Oh, never may I drop a murmuring word under my sufferings. "He hath not despised nor abhorred the afflictions of the afflicted, but when he cried unto him he heard him."

January 1843.—Much of what I have related took place under very deep affliction. I have still much cause to praise the Lord for new mercies every day. I would again bear my humble testimony to the faithfulness and gracious care of my covenant God. Should the Lord's dealings with one of the greatest debtors encourage any under suffering, or should what I have written encourage those who visit the sick and needy not to be weary of their labours, that the Lord may be glorified, is my only motive.

ELIZABETH SHERWOOD.

Trinity Almshouse.

There are some who doubt the authenticity of what is related in narrative tracts. They say, "I

never heard poor people talk like that." Surely reading the above well-expressed and strictly copied autobiography is a convincing coincidence that such remarks in tracts are possible, and perfectly true.

It is also an illustration of the reality of the Holy Spirit's teaching the same truths both to the learned and the unlearned, to the noble and to the simple, to the Countess of Huntingdon, the Duchess of Gordon, or Elizabeth Sherwood in the almshouse.

But we must say farewell to the Trinity Alms-houses.

It was a sad morning when we went round for the last time in February 1860. Whenever good-bye times shade our path, Elizabeth's parting words echo cheerily.

"How I shall miss you all! It has struck me that Christian friends are like shadows. There could be no shadow without the sun—there can be no friend without Jesus. Like a shadow, friends reflect something to me from the Lord Jesus, but they all flit by and pass away. And friends *must* pass by to leave one clear void for the Lord Jesus alone to fill. He must fill all things; so friends are flitting shadows, Jesus the never passing Light!"

II.

WALKS AND TALKS.

To reach some distant districts we were most thankful for a ride. It was a good preparation for the day's work to drive up the long, steep hills, and there was time to enjoy the ever-widening, ever-varying views of forest, hill, and valley. Sometimes a happy little party filled up the waggonette. They liked snatches of information about the dwellers in the cottages we rapidly passed, and they liked to peep into our tract bag, which also contained provision for the day, and tea, for which some widow's kettle would boil; and it was pleasant to hope, when our walks and talks were all over, and our night of death come, when no man can work, that those merry, bright-eyed children might then be ministering messengers in the haunts we loved so well. But we must leave the carriage, and turn into lonely lanes, over stiles, and through woods with mazy paths. These walks were indeed refreshing, away from street air, street noise, and street sin. In the scattered cottages dwelt

many humble believers. Over their firesides and arm-chairs might be written, "In His hand are all the corners of the earth."

Visiting a cottage farm, round which cherry trees thickly grew, and touching even the door, the maid asked me to walk in. This was the third call without seeing any one, as baking, or churning, or dinner suggested it was wiser only to leave tracts. The aged master put out his hand, and as I took it, said,

"It warn't your good will that brought you here to-day!"

"Oh, yes, indeed it was."

"No, it warn't your will; it was Christ's will. Your'n His servant. He put it in your heart to come and see me. Sit you down, and welcome. Ever since you left those tracts, I've been praying the Lord would bless your work. And I know He will; you'll get some for His crown of glory out here."

"Thank you very much for your prayers. I am sure you would not pray for others if you did not know the Lord Jesus. May I ask what brought you to know Him?"

"'Cause I thought the devil would have me! It was the text of a sermon first made me think, 'Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.' I felt I had not accepted pardon, and knew nothing of salvation. For three weeks I was in agony of mind, and could find no relief from the fright of being lost. One day I was at work in the fields, miserable, but still thinking over that text. In a moment I saw it—salvation for me, *now*, to-day. I

could have jumped the hedge for joy. I threw down my spade. I must get on my knees and thank my Saviour. My heart filled with joy and love. I can't describe my happiness. I wanted nothing—nothing but Christ. This was many years ago. The Lord never gave me up, though I went backwards many a time. Like Peter, I followed Him too far off; but He comes nearer to me now—nearer than ever. Ay, through faith a man can do anything. It's 'Believe and live.' I see that in every page of the Gospel. And I take it, Miss, to believe Christ Himself is to have Christ in your heart. He says and I believe Him, '*His Word is himself.*'"

And the old man laid his hand on the large Bible, identifying the written word with the personal Word. "The word of God is quick and powerful." (Heb. iv. 12.) "His name is called the Word of God." (Rev. xix. 13.) "In the full assurance of faith," he exclaimed, "I shall go up with Him very soon. Yes, I shall hear *it* and go."

The ear that was waiting and watching for the Master's *voice* thought of no other "*it*."

Then he sent the maid to bring me a plate of cherries, and his sister who keeps house, brought me a glass of milk, as I refused all offers of cider or cowslip wine.

When I said good-bye, he blessed me, adding, "Come again very soon. He'll be with you and give you utterance to speak to poor sinners. He'll open their hearts for you."

When I called again, he had crept on his crutches


to look at his sheep in the cherry orchard. After greetings, he remarked, "Christ knows all His sheep; He'll sort them; He'll take the sheep from the goats. That'll be a glorious time—one family, one fold. Christ knows all His sheep without marking them."

After getting back to his arm-chair, he told how happy he always was. "I am in Christ, and out of the devil's reach. Ah, I was in the devil's paw once. We're all alike. 'All have sinned and come short of His glory.' It's out of our power to save ourselves. It's when you feel Christ in your heart by the witness of the Spirit that makes you happy. It isn't only reading, but feeling His precious word in your soul; ah, that's the rejoicing of my heart."

"There are many sects and parties, I hear of them in my little corner; but it makes no odds what a man is called, *so that he's in Christ.*"

One more visit to the Cherry Cottage. John had been ill with the "brown cratur," as his sister termed bronchitis. But, as ever, his happiness was overflowing, singing of the goodness of the Lord. He told me that when ill, he quite thought he was going to die, and he was only glad that the time was come. "All fear of death has long passed away. He's here, my blessed Jesus; He's good to me; I can bear anything with Him so near. He's all my study, my precious, precious Jesus."

His sister said, "It isn't only when he is awake, but when he's asleep, he's full of joy; he hoots out 'glory, glory,' and about 'my blessed Jesus.'"



always dreaming
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al cottages; each had
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 woman:—

son that I knew the love
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 twenty-seven shillings a bushel.
 cant, and I believe some of the
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 pence now was then one shilling a
 war time, and I heard of the fight at
 used to hear my mother praying—that
 ink. Then I saw my little brothers and
 g cold and dead—that made me think
 the nearest school was nearly four miles
 I went, Sundays and week-days. The
 v. J. Cawood prayed with us, times and
 How well I remember him, patting our heads
 ally, and giving us pink sweeties. He was the

first to start Sunday schools. I've heard when he was curate that he would be knocking at the doors before eight on Sundays to remind the mothers school would begin at nine. It pleased God to bless his teaching and praying. I was led to see myself nothing, nothing but a wretch and a sinner, but *all* I needed in Christ Jesus. That's the way I first went to Christ, and that's the way I go still, and He lays His hand on me and heals me. I often wake with Him, and lift up my heart and say, 'Oh, teach me; oh, speak to me.' This hymn often runs in my mind—

“ ‘ Oh, teach me more of Thy blest ways,
Thou holy Lamb of God,
And fix and root me in Thy grace
As one redeemed by blood.

“ ‘ Oh, tell me often of Thy love
Of all Thy grief and pain,
And let my heart with joy confess
That thence comes all my gain.’

“ We are quite left alone here in this little wilderness, no visitor ever came till you and the other good lady called. It is so comfortable to see you come. Yet I'm not alone, for I do realise Him so near, that, like John, I seem to lean on His bosom. I see more and more what He has done for me, and that all our righteousness is as filthy rags. The book you lent me has been such a comfort.” It was sermons on “The Matchless Beauty of Jesus” by our Campden House chaplain, Rev. J. Parker; and here in this out-of-the-world cottage was a king's

daughter, one who could say, "My beloved is mine, and I am His." We sang some of her favourite hymns together, and then said good-bye.

Testimony to the value of early instruction was given me by a dying woman. Years ago she was in my father's Sunday school at Astley, and in E. P. H.'s class. I found her suffering with bronchial disease, and fast sinking. During an interval of relief she poured forth such praises for all the way that God had led her. She said, "All the verses and hymns I learnt when young are such a comfort to me now. We learnt the Gospel for the day, and Watts's Hymns in our class. After church and school, I never went off playing, as many of the children did. My parents were godly, and watched over me; they never let me go to fairs, or dances, or theatres. All I heard at school and church seemed to stick to me. Then I went to service. The last time I saw your dear father was on the common, he stopped me, gave me such kind advice. Oh, he was so loved, praise the Lord I had such a minister. But I never found true peace till some time after I had been in service. My mistress noticed how unhappy I looked, and told me she often found comfort by opening her Bible and reading a verse. I opened mine, and read, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." That comforted me, and encouraged me to seek on. One evening I read the twentieth chapter of John, and how the Lord said, 'Behold my hands and my feet.' I can't tell how clear it all seemed to me then. Jesus died for me,

His hands and feet pierced for me. Then I seemed to see all my sins lying like a great bunch at the foot of the cross, and by faith I saw them all cast on Jesus. I was so happy, I thought I must go home and tell mother to get her sins pardoned too. I went to ask mistress; she said, 'What's the matter, child?' 'I want to tell mother I've found Jesus and am happy.' This is years ago, and my Saviour has never left me. I have often been cold and wandering, but He's the same. I long, I long to see Him, then I shall be like Him. I've one wish, and that is, if I could see my Sunday school teacher again." The wish was granted shortly before she entered into rest.

Another walk brought us to a cottage where most original talks amused and interested us. We won the poor woman's heart by bringing new ribbons to trim her wonderful bonnet. It really was a *bonnet*, in the coal-scuttle style of fifty years ago.

"Well, now, think of a lady touching my bonnet. Why, it looks better than new. Them strings be rich; shan't I lap it up for Sundays! Never no lady troubled herself to come to this cottage before, and to think of sewing for me! May the Lord return your kindness, I can't; but you'll see me crawl down to your door some day. Our parsnips are beauties, and you'll just boil some with your next bit of mutton, and think of me."

One evening I asked if she would like to tell me about her early life.

"That I should. You'll know me better then,

and you'll find as I tells no lies; the truth's the truth. Years ago I was as gay as any one; never troubled about my soul. It's true I could read, but I'm just sure the Lord put the first thought into my head His own self. One day I was coming through that coppy (*i.e.*, coppice) yonder, from cutting heather for the besoms. I was alone, and the place was lone. A feeling came over me that my soul warn't safe. I trembled with the fear. I threw down the burden of heather and knelt under a tree. I always mark that tree now when I passes it. That was my first prayer to the Lord Jesus, and I axed Him to give me the Holy Spirit. Warn't it Him now that put it in my heart? warn't He a-saying, 'Seek and ye shall find?' I did find. I found Him, and I loved Him for wearing the thorns on His brow and bleeding for me; ay, and I love Him now. There's a hymn I want to learn perfect, 'I lay my sins on Jesus.' I do love a bit of singing. Please to let me sing you one of my hymns as I've puzzled over till I'se got *him* perfect.

"I suppose you want the tracts back. I'se many a spell over them. There's one book fits me beautiful, something for every day in it. Poor as I am, I w'dn't take the value of a gold sovereign for it.

"I wish I had had the headpiece on my shoulders twenty years ago that I'se got now, t'w'd have been happier for me.

"You sees, Miss, as I goes to church and you goes to church, but it don't sense the meaning in to

me like. One night I was down for some errands in the town, and I see'd a crowd going in the school-room, says I, 'What's there?' 'A prayer meetin'.' So I went in. I never shan't forget her as read the Scriptures. I thought her the beautiful'st cratur, just like an hangel. I can't say as ever I see'd one; but you may depind on't, as good people be something similar. Mrs. F.'s prayer gave me a lift, and helped me on a good bit.

"I can't scrawl so far now, but I do get to Miss C.'s reading pretty regular. Some goes there, and some doesn't, and many's the word and the jeer at me from them as ain't in Jesus. I think it no disgrace to humble myself. I'm a poor sinner, and I says it. But it's worth all to catch hold of Jesus. I cares for nothing but Him now, and to get to my prayers, then I'm happy.

"You can't get on without prayer. I mind two or three children for their slaving mothers. You can't kneel down with them a worritting round you all day. Don't I long for them to be gone! I set the tea for my husband (he's such a beauty!), and I never pours out a cup till he comes; but often I wants my prayers the worst, and so leaves him and the tea, and goes off to the shed to my knees. I knows He gives me what I axes for. I'm like the woman as had the issue of blood, I came behind Him at first; now I've more faith, more hope. Ain't I happy! Don't you think as He helps me? I knows it. I'm under the frowns of the world, and such a poor object. Look at my poor legs!

helps me to scrawl to the readings. I'm never terrified now, never fretted. If I haven't a bit of bread in the house, He knows it, and He sends it. Yes, I've great faith, I does believe in Him. When I'm weary with the toils of the day I gets His book; that's my comfort and my company. My husband's a trying at it too. He never worrits me, never axes, where have you been? Ah, he's the beauty of a husband!"

Perhaps some sister worker may say, "When are you going to tell us of discouraging walks and talks? Have you none of these?"

Oh, yes, we could fill volumes. Like every seed-sower, we meet with the stony ground, the thickets of thorny cares, and the rock which lacketh moisture. We could tell of half-opened doors and the uncivil reply. We could tell of almost trembling to take the message to some terrible drunkard, and how he has darted out through his back door, and so the opportunity seemed lost. We could tell of the sneering laugh and the coarse joke, as we turned away from trying to speak kindly but faithfully to some poor woman in the paths of sin. Yes, we could tell of visit after visit which seemed to bring no result, no success, no conversion, no melting of the heartlessness and indifference, which is more hopeless than even the downright attack and abuse of "all parsons and visitors and tracts." But our Master never fails us. He who endured the contradiction of sinners, He who was grieved with their hardness of heart and unbelief, can and does supply

the needed wisdom, the soft answer, the exhaustless reply from "It is written." By singling out examples of good done by schools, visits, tracts, and, above all, by the ever-living lever of God's Word, which alone can raise the dead soul from its weight of sin and misery, all the praise and all the glory flows back to Him who alone giveth the increase. Go straight to your Master, dear sister, before every walk and talk, and remember it is His work, not yours, that the Lord is working *with you* both in the cottage of the drunkard, the blasphemer, and the stout-hearted ones, as well as in "ministering to the saints," and enjoying their heavenly conversation. Passing, as we must do, from the dwelling of the sinner to the believer, let us remember, "Such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

III.

WALKS AND TALKS IN IRELAND.

A LITTLE girl overtook me, and said, "Fine morning to you, Miss."

We walked together, and she told me about her father, who "went to Amerikey, and how she, and Mother, and Pat meant to follow him, some day, over the big say."

I asked if she could read ?

"Sorra bit."

"Did you pray this morning ?"

"I did. I said, 'Hail Mary' and 'Our Father.'"

"I am glad you know 'Our Father.' Can you tell me who it is that forgives us our trespasses ?"

"Shure, an' it's the Blessed Virgin herself."

"But when you said 'Our Father,' who did you speak to ? Now, just think a minute."

"I did spake to herself, jist. 'Thine, O Mary, is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory.'"

"Who taught you this ?"

"His riverence, shure enough."

"Do you know who made this prayer ?"

"Wasn't it the Lord Jesus Christ?"

"Quite right. And when He was a little baby, had the Virgin Mary any kingdom or any fine house to live in? Do you know where she laid Him?"

"In the manger."

"Yes, dear child, she had not even a cradle or a room at the inn. She never had any power on earth: we never read of her doing one wonderful thing. The Lord Jesus said in His last prayer, 'The glory which thou gavest me I have given them,' that is, to all His disciples, and to you and me; and when He went away He said, 'All power is given to me in heaven and in earth.' Now, I will read you the prayer just as the Lord Jesus said it for St. Peter to learn. Our trespasses mean breaking God's law, sinning against Him. As our sin is against God, so God only can forgive us. And He could not forgive us till the Lord Jesus had kept all the law for us; and, because of our trespasses, He died to bear our punishment. Did you ever hear this verse—'God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you?'"

The child looked up at me, laughed, and ran off, saying, "How do I know that?"

Further on, a young woman was sitting by the roadside crying. I said, "What is the matter?"

"Oh, my lady, I'm frightened; some fellows ran after me. I've got four miles more to go this lonesome road, and there's no one to take care of me."

"But I am on this lonely road, too, and I'm not

frightened. I look up and know my Father in the sky is taking care of me, for Jesus Christ's sake. God's children are always safe under His eye and His care."

"Yes, Miss, but I'm under the order of the blessed scapular of the Virgin."

"Will you tell me what that means?"

The girl pulled a string off her neck and showed me a small square of gray cloth, with a cross marked on it in red silk.

"The priest blessed this and put the holy water on it, and if I wear it till I die, the Virgin is bound to come and release me when I've been an hour in purgatory."

What a cobweb hope! We had a long talk, and I tried to show her she was trusting in a lie, and that her very fright showed the Virgin was no help to her, and then set before her the glorious Gospel, which tells of a living Saviour and ever-present friend.

My next companion was a nice-looking widow woman. She listened attentively to some remarks, and then said, "My sins are a big weight, but, with the help of the Holy Mother of God, and through her powerful intercession, I'll be saved."

"But the Bible never once tells us that the Virgin does or can intercede. The Lord Jesus said, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by me.'"

"Oh, my dear lady, can He refuse His own blessed Mother?"

"Yes, He did. She came when He was preach-

ing, and He would not leave off to go and speak to her."

"But wasn't she born a pure and holy Virgin?"

"No; for if she was, she would not have gone in the Temple to offer the turtle dove for her purification, according to the law of Moses; and if she was not a sinner, she would not have said, 'My spirit hath rejoiced in God, my Saviour.'"

"O ma'am, dear, didn't she go up with her body and soul into glory, and sit on the throne next to the Father? Isn't she all-powerful? No, as long as I live I'll put my trust in the blessed Mother of Heaven."

"The Lord says, 'Cursed is the man that trusteth in man.' Have you ever looked in your own Douay Bible to see if all you believe about the Virgin is true?"

"Oh, no, the priest won't let us read the Bible; it isn't for the likes of me, a poor, ignorant cratur, to dare to do that."

"Then your priest contradicts the Lord Jesus, who commanded us to 'search the Scriptures.' Let me just tell you from the Bible that the Virgin Mary is never once spoken of as an intercessor. Christ said, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in *my name* I will give it you.' 'There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.' And why that one? Because He 'gave himself a ransom for all' Only He who paid the ransom could be the mediator. Did the Virgin

shed her blood? Did the Apostles ever ask her to intercede for them?"

"Well, ma'am, dear, I have been brought up in this belief, and I'll never lave it. I have my trials and heart-sores heavy enough, heavy indeed."

"Then listen to these kind words of the Saviour, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' See He did not say, 'Come to the Virgin,' but 'Come unto me.' You are weary, and your heaviest load is sin. The Lord Jesus bore that load on the cross, and it is such rest when we really believe our sins were laid on Him there."

There were tears in her eye as we parted.

Stopping at a lonely cabin, before I said a word on religion, the woman began to storm at me, probably from catching a glance of tracts. I sat quietly waiting for a lull.

"I can tell you what you are; you are not what I am, I was born in the one true holy Church, and in that I'm safe, and in that Church I'll die. You nor no one can be safe out of it. Ah, you tell me where your Church sprung from! You a born lady of larnin' (learning) and talent, an' I know you can't answer me that. I'm only jist a poor cratur in rags, but I know my Church is on the rock of St. Peter, and there's no movin' that. Don't tell me of the Bible. I have my holy director the priest, and he's inspired of God. I put all my trust in the holy Mother of God, and in all the angels and in all

the saints. Isn't she next to God? Dare her Son refuse her? Ah, no! I'm in the Church, the true Church. I know what I'm sprung from, and you a born lady, don't. But I know what you're sprung from, Luther and Calvin, two devils! Don't get out your Bible, and don't talk to me of Christ as all your sort do, talk to me of the holy blessed Mother of God. O Mary, I adore thee!"

All this and more: I could only kindly say a word or two from the one book of truth, and left her.

In another cabin the woman willingly let me read some verses to her. She told me she had such fear she should never get to heaven at last. "How shall I ever earn it?"

"It is not our earning, the Lord Jesus earned it for us, and it is a free gift. His word says, 'The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.'"

"But shure, the blessed Virgin intercedes, and I can't be saved without her."

"But, my dear woman, God never once told us to pray to her, and when He taught His disciples to pray it was to our Father. He never named the Virgin."

"Oh, but He did put, 'Hail Mary, for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory.'"

She listened quietly to the truth, and seemed really anxious to find salvation. But when there is so much rubbish to clear away it takes long to find the hidden pearl, the one only Saviour. Often the opportunity of speaking to them never came

back. Those who received my visits civilly the first time were afterwards either frightened to speak to me or abusive. They would go out of the cabin, stand on the road, call the hens or feed the pigs, not speaking a word, or even returning "good morning."

Their tenacity of belief in the Virgin, to the exclusion of the sufficiency of the Lord Jesus to save, is the most frequent and fatal error. To earn, to merit heaven by their own good works or suffering, is another dogma. A woman said to me,—

"Christ did suffer on the cross, but that wouldn't save me without sufferin' myself. The blessed martyrs had to die their death, or they wouldn't be in heaven this minute. If I don't have sufferin' here, I must in purgatory. And as for you, you scorn the holy Mother of God. Shure, she's just the same as God; she's next to Him on the throne. There *is* souls tumblin' into hell more than the stars of heaven, because they won't believe in the holy blessed Mother, the Queen of Heaven. Shure in the day of judgment won't her Son hold forth her glory?"

Reply seemed often like throwing a pebble to stop a waterfall; still the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation."

One morning a woman received me very civilly, and it was the second visit. As she allowed me to read before, I took out my Testament. She said,—

"You'll excuse me, Miss, dear, I'd like to hear more of your little book rale well, but I dar'n't; it's

against our priest to hear or read any of your books; he forbids us."

"But he can't forbid you hearing the Bible, God's own Word?"

"No, I mustn't. I know nothing about the Bible. I never saw one, for it's not for the likes of us. I've got plenty of books and the general history of the Church. I ax your pardon, my lady, but didn't our Lord fix St. Peter's chair? Didn't He build the one true holy Church on St. Peter, and our holy Popes come straight from him."

"Yes, that is the great difference between our Churches; you build your Church on St. Peter, we build on the Lord Jesus Christ. St. Peter himself said, 'This is the stone, set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.' St. Peter said, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,' and on this doctrine, this rock we build, for, 'Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus.' Christ is the living stone, chosen of God, precious—see here it is in St. Peter's own letter."

The woman looked kindly at me, and said,—

"O acushla, won't you come into our true Church! You don't know all we believe, you don't know our ten commandments."

"O yes, I do, I really learnt them when I was a little girl. Will you say me the second?"

She said the third. I turned to the 20th chapter of Exodus, and showed her the commandment they altogether omit.

"Faix, I never heard a word of that before."

"Shall I tell you why your priests hide this command from you? Because it forbids what they teach you to do. The great God in heaven said, 'Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above or in the earth beneath, thou shalt not bow down to them.' Does not your Church make images and teach you to bow down to them and worship them?"

I do not give the woman's answer, as my notes fail me, but there was no denial of the fact that images are made, are set up, and that they do bow down before them while asking the intercessions of the saints they represent.

I asked her if she believed the words, "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world?" She said she did, but evidently put a different meaning to them.

"Oh, yes, He did take the sin away, glory be to His holy name; but shure I must follow Him by penance and confession, and good works, and I must ate His own body and blood our priest offers up on the altar."

Alas! whatever proof I gave her from Scripture, she replied—

"Well, acushla, yours must be the wrong Bible, but if ever his riverence brings your sort into fashion I'll get one."

Poor thing, she was so kind in her way, and the big Irish love, that is always warm down in their

heart's core, came gushing out between all our disagreements.

Another morning I called on a woman who had asked me to come again. I had happened to extract a thorn from her hand, which had given her pain some days. This had opened the way to speak of one who wore the crown of thorns for us. As I stood talking to her three or four boys threw lumps of dirt at me. The woman called to the mother of the boys to bid them leave off, but she took no notice. My poor friend then ordered them off. She was a kind-hearted creature, and most anxious to get me into her Church.

"Oh, lady, honey, don't be vexed with me for sayin' it, but shure unless you're baptized in our Holy Church you never can be saved. Oh, cushla machree, don't dispise the blessed Mother. Shure her Son won't do anything for you unless she axes Him. When we get safe into heaven won't we meet the blessed Mother first, houldin' the gates of glory open for us? and then won't we fall down on our two poor knees, avick, and thank her for bringin' us in? Now, wouldn't you just let me tell his riverence that you aint quite asy about your sowl, you that pulled the thorn out with your nice white hands. Oh, acushla, I'll never think of you without offerin' up a prayer for your sowl. Ah, if you'd only just let his riverence convert you, and get a sprinkle of the holy water, the love of the Virgin would *bile* up in your heart, and you could do it so asy, my darlint. I'd never brathe a word of it

to any one, barrin' the priest himself—God bless him."

How could I but admire her loving zeal. She ever afterwards allowed me to speak the words of light and life, and, I believe, after many days, that they may be found bearing fruit.


When I turned away, the boys followed me with a pelting shower. Happily they were content with clods only; had they thought of stones, something more than my parasol must have been broken. I tried speaking kindly to them, which, being useless, there was no help for it but to walk quietly on, till a cottage came in sight, and then they ran off.

There was one little cabin where I always received a truly hearty "Cead mille failtha."

"Oh, thin, don't stand knockin', for shure that's my own dear, sweet lady's voice. Come in, avick machree! Is it you've got married, that's it's this two long years I've been watin' for your shadow at my doore. Oh, acushla! Rosie drive thim hins out, they needn't be layin' their eggs in the bolster till my lady's gone! Shoo, shoo, now. There, look at the cratur's over her head an' under her feet, Rosie, Rosie clare thim out intirely, and clane the chair for the lady to sit down. It's your own chair, my lady dear; we riz the price of it, and got it purposely for yourself, for shure the likes of you shouldn't sit on the stools. Oh, but it's good luck and a blessin' come to me iver since your voice brought the music to me heart. Wasn't the cowl'd black earth (mud floor), me bed, and only

the straw to soften it, acushla! Wasn't it you an' the darlint lady (Mrs. S.) that lifted me off it, an' put me on this fine comforting bed-stud, and didn't the life come back to me poor unfortunate bones. See, avourneen, I can move me hands an' me feet now with the help of your darlin' flannil, that's never wore out this months an' years.

"When I lay there in the corner on the cowl'd earth, an' often wished mysel' under it intirely, no priest ever crossed the thrashil' of the doore to see if I had a sowl or a body, but shure he didn't forget to send for his dues to my poor cabin, that hadn't the price of a windey (window) in it, nor as much as a chimley, let alone how it smoked me as dry as the herrin's. But shure the Lord sent me good friends, an' wasn't it them words of His that stuck to me heart, 'Come to me all ye that weary, an' be heavy laden, and I'll give you rest.' And I'll never change, with the help of God. The priest come wonst (once) when the Scriptur-reader was standin' there, an' says he, 'Which of us do you choose?' an' says he, 'if you choose that fellow and his book, I warn ye I'll not come when the death sweat's on ye, and, if I don't come, ye know well enough ye'll die out if the true Church an' be lost.' 'Sir,' says I, 'you never came to me till the Protestants did, they were me first friends, and they tould me the words that's claned and lightened my sowl intirely. It's their Bible I believe, and you needn't be throublin' about my sowl now, nor whin I'm dyin'. I've larnt where



He says, 'Yea though I walk through the valley, &c.' No, me lady, I'll stick to the Great Priest, and His own blessed words! See, I can say all the verses for ye now, they come runnin' in my head like the clane fresh water arising in the little spring."

And then she repeated, with a few cabin variations, the 23d Psalm, the 14th of St. John, and many of the hundred mission texts.

Coming away I saw a woman following me till a turn in the lane. Where no one could see, she beckoned me to stop. I did not know her; indeed, I never asked any of their names, but she told me this:—

"Two years ago I met you on a lonesome road, you gave me two tracts, 'The Brazin Sarpint' and 'My God and Father.' I've worn thim tracts inch by inch away. The heart in my body often longs for a taste of His word, but I darn't let it be known. I never go to confession now, nor to mass aither. No one that is born of a woman will ever make me put my trust in any one but Him, Jesus the Lord, my Saviour. Haven't I looked to Him lifted up on the cross for me, an' He's haled my soul, glory be to His blessed and holy name for ever. I'm lonely and poor, my lady, but I tell my blessed Jesus all, and I pray day and night for His own good Spirit, and I hope I'll be would Himself some day. It troubles me greatly that I'm frightened to go to your church; perhaps I'll get stronger."

We walked together some distance and she joyfully took a Testament.

Another welcome awaited me from a very old woman, who had told me long ago how "she trembled to think of the fire of purgatory, and she didn't know how long she'd burn there, for she'd no son to pay for masses to get her out." And when I told her that God's word said nothing about purgatory, and asked her why she thought she must go there she told me that it was because of her sins. Then I read to her of Him who by Himself purged away our sins, that "the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin," and other texts. She listened with her heart, saying, "Oh, that it might be so! Oh, what good words! Oh, can I come to Him now? I thought I never could do good works enough, and that I must burn in purgatory before I could get to Him."

It was to find out these trembling hidden ones, it was to tell of deliverance to the captives—to tell "the old, old, story of Jesus and His love"—to tell of the one living High Priest, ever willing, ever able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, which made it worth while to lose one's way and get home tired and late for dinner.

And if I now give examples of ignorance it is in pitying love, and the wish that it may open both ends of some purses for the fuller maintenance of that good old Irish Society, which sends forth valiant walkers and talkers, who, as one of them said to me, "go forth with the raal sword of the Spirit in their

hands, and the burning love of the Lord Jesus in their hearts, to search out them He bought with His own blood."

Seeing quite a shelf full of books in a cabin one day I asked the owner if he had the best book in the world.

"O yes; I can show it to you," and he handed me "Lives of the Saints," by F. W. Faber.

"But this is not God's book, *His* must be the best."

"Ah, well, but you know Bibles are very dear. How could I rize five shillings for one? And besides I'm too ignorant to read it. St. Austin said he would not believe the Scripture without the authority of the Church, and so do I. I would believe nothing but what my Church says, not even the Bible. No, my lady, there's one true Church, and unless you're in that, and receive the sacraments, and do penance and good works, you'll be lost. Do you believe, Miss, that you ate the blessed body in your Church?"

"No, certainly not, for when the Lord Jesus first said to the disciples, 'Take eat, this is my body,' His body was there alive, standing before them. How could they eat His living body, it had not yet been offered on the cross? Besides, He ate the bread and drank the wine *with* the disciples; did He eat Himself?"

"Of coorse, He did, *the Lord received Himself, He ate Himself, and then told them to ate His body, and I firmly believe that if I ate the body of Christ that's my salvation.*"

We had a long talk, but, like many others, he understood all mention of the blood of the Lord Jesus as referring entirely to the literal blood of Christ in the sacramental cup.

Another woman, who when a child had learnt Scripture in an Infant School, told me,—

“I’ll never forget my verses and little hymns that her that’s dead and gone up there first taught me. Didn’t she send for us up to her own house and read what’s stuck deep down in many a heart, an’ ’ill never lave it, and didn’t he come to see that we didn’t forget her sweet words; the blessin’ of the Lord rest on them she’s left behind her.”

In a lonely road I saw a girl carrying a chair, and presently a woman looking very ill sat down on it for rest. I stopped to ask kindly what was the matter, and spoke of the Lord Jesus. Without the remotest hint of controversy she began at me in this strain :—

“Don’t spake to me, I know what you are; can’t I see what’s in your bag? Don’t I know how your books run the Mother of God down; if there were five thousand women here this minute wouldn’t she be the pure and holy one? How dar you born in sin say that she wasn’t a pure holy Virgin? I’m sorry for the likes of you out of the true Church, goin’ to a thousand hells where you’ll be wantin’ a drop of wather. Don’t talk to me. I know a Protestant that went to a priest to ax him if he could be saved, and he told him what I now tell you, ‘You’re lost!’” and she laughed.

Poor thing, I waited till she left off, and then quietly answered her with a smooth pebble from my brook, and went on my way praying for her.

A widow asked me to read to her from my little book again. She said—

“My daughter and all the neighbours are agin your readin’, and tell me I oughtn’t to let you in, but I’m shure it’s the truth you read, and I’ll hear it. I may die soon, and it’s all my thoughts and consarn to get my sins pardoned.”

As I read she kept praying, “Lord, grant me that! Oh, that I may be worthy! Oh, that I may earn heaven! Isn’t the Lord too vexed with me for all my past sins? But I do pray to the holy Mother of God to pardon me.”

I took her hand, saying, “You know I love you.”

“Yes, acushla, or you wouldn’t have found me out; and I love you. And may the Lord speed you and send you your health.”

“Thank you, I do love you, and I love your soul; so I want to tell you quite plainly it is not the Virgin Mary who can pardon you, for ‘neither is there salvation in any other, there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.’ The Virgin never shed her blood for you, dear woman. Isn’t the Lord Jesus the First and the Last. Didn’t He save the thief on the Cross?”

“Yes, I do put Him first and foremost, but I was always tould to pray all to the holy Mother, for hasn’t she power to intercede? O God, be merciful

to me a sinner! Oh, do send me the right way. Oh, I'd go any way to get my sins wiped clane off."

After reading the good tidings and praying with her, she learnt off three or four texts, saying, "I'll think it all over when you're gone."

Once more I saw her, and the light was chasing away the darkness. God's own word had taken root amid the rubbish of early teaching. I took her an eye-shade, for which she was very grateful. Taking off my hat to read to her, she put her hand kindly on my head, saying, "The Lord love you." She listened very earnestly while I read the Bible to her, and she let me kneel and pray; and as I left her, she kept saying, "Lord Jesus, give me the water of life." And though in after visits her relatives would either lock the door, or stand and refuse admittance, I have not a doubt His Word was to her the power of God unto salvation.

Often kind efforts were made for my "conversion," and it was touching to see the warm love gushing up for those Protestant friends who *showed* their faith by their works. "Yours can't be a very bad religion when it makes such men as Mr. S.," said one—ay, said many.

It may not be amiss to give verbatim some of their testimonies to Protestant love, which was a strong and unanswered evidence that if not in their "true Church," yet they surely had the true love of God and man in their hearts.

"Shure, and isn't it to his dure we fly when we're

sick or sore, in want or distress? Isn't it his blankets that warms us the length of the long cowl'd winter, and isn't his hand that's ever stretched with the kindness to us? Didn't he face the cholera, the cratur, and run with the hot bottles and the powders and the red flannel, everywhere he heard there was a poor sowl sick and sufferin'? Shure the' ra'al love of God must be blazin' up in his heart, or he'd never feel for the poor as he does. And it's what I often think in myself that heaven would be a quare place intirely if he warn't there!

"And the good lady herself, Mrs. S. I mane, shure a more tinderer, kinder cratur' you couldn't find in the walls of the world. Let a poor body go to her dure when they may, isn't she always ready to see them and spake to them? She doesn't send the cowl'd message by the mouth of a sarvant. No, she comes to you her own self (ah, it's asy seen the ra'al true blood of a lady flows in her veins), and she axes you so kind-like to step into the beautiful illigant hall, that would dazzle your eyes to look at, and then she'd listen so quiet and patient-like to all our troubles and trials, and spake the feelin' words about the holy Saviour of the world, that the sound of her sweet voice, sayin' it so tinder, would bring the comfort into your breast. And she wouldn't stop at the good words aither, for she'd have a kind feel for your unfortunate body as well as your sowl, and her hand would be stretched with the can of sweet milk, and the arrowroot, and the drop of wine, and the beautiful fine broth, that you might

carry home in the tail of your cloak without spillin' a drop of it, it would be so darlint thick. Ah! many an' many's the time the heart might drop down out of our bodies wid want an' weakness if it warn't for her goodness to us. May it all meet her at the gate of glory, an' may the blessin' an' bini-diction of the heavenly Father be about her an' hers here an' hereafter!

"It's little use, avick machree, we'd have goin' to ax for help at the priests' dure, *they never have any-thing to give*; and it's mighty quare they'd look if you went to hear mass of a Sunday without drop-pin' your two or three pence into the money-box at the chapel dure. To tell you the truth, you'd have no business facin' them without it, for it's 'No money, no mass.'

"'Cast thy bread upon the waters, and it shall be found after many days,' might be written over that Protestant porch and illigant hall."

It was curious the effect which hymns or simple rhymes had upon Irish listeners; perhaps from their novelty, perhaps from the rhythm striking some un-awakened chords within. I shall never forget the open mouths, the tears, the sobs, when reading to a gathering of Protestants and Romanists that heart-touching rhyme—

"Oh, why is little Willie dead?"*

The next morning a Romanist came to the hall

* "Little Willie, the Infant-School Scholar." By Jennette

door to beg I would read "Little Willie" again; it had sounded in her ears all the night, and she watched and wearied for the morning to hear the sweet words over again. When I began, down went the woman on her knees: "Shure them darlint words won't let me be sitting." She learnt the whole by heart.

Another of Mrs. S.'s "pinsioners" went to a friend, and she also read to her "Little Willie." She listened most attentively, and then said, "It's what I'm thinkin' in myself that the good lady that made that purty little *hemn*, must have lost a darlin' sweet babby herself, or she could never say the words so terrible feelin'.

"I felt a chokin' and a squeezin' in my bussum all the time you were readin' it, for didn't it bring back to my mim'ry my own poor little Paddy that was the pulse of my heart and the pride and the light of my eyes for three bright summers? But now, ah, now! my fine bouchal bawee (fair boy) lies cowl'd and stiff in his coffin under the daisy-sod, ten long years come this Michaelmas. And though he's all that wary time gone from my arms, still the house to this day feels dead and desolate for the sound of his little foot, and the shout of his purty voice. Ah, wirrasthrue! he was *my* little Willie, the bird of my bussum! The light of heaven for ever to his sowl!"

But to resume our Walks and Talks. Sometimes they seemed pleased, yet frightened to see me again. I am writing of those who have passed away long

ago, so that it cannot injure them to repeat their words. One said, "There now, God bless you, Miss, but don't be stayin' with me, for if my girl comes in and finds me talking to you there'll be such a row, and maybe hear of it a Sunday, when I wouldn't like to have your name put up. Not but what I like you to turn in to my poor bit of a place. I'm a poor ignorant cratur, how can I be saved, how can I ever earn it?"

"It's not earning at all, dear, it's God's free gift, because the Lord Jesus earned it for us. 'The wages of sin is death,' that's what you and I earned; but the Lord Jesus took our sin and took the wages for it too. Because He took our sin He was made a curse for us, and God paid to Him on the cross all the wages of our sins, and then, because He paid our debt, God gives us eternal life for His sake. Will you learn off this verse, and then you can think about it. (Rom. vi. 23.) You can't get out to work now, but your child does, and she brings home her earnings—her wages, and gives it to you. Now that loaf on the table, is it your earning or your child's gift? You take and eat it, though you did not earn it. So we poor sinners can earn nothing, merit nothing, deserve nothing; but our dear Lord and Saviour did the work for us, and on the cross said, 'It is finished.' He brings His earnings to us, His salvation, His atonement, His death for us; won't you take the earnings of Jesus Christ, pardon and peace, and life eternal? 'And this is

the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.'"

She thanked me and said, "It's clearer now, my dear."

Resting in a cottage, the woman, in answer to some remark, said, "But it's good works and charity to the poor that saves the sowl, Miss. There was a very rich man once, I've been tould, that was mighty bad and wicked intirely, the curse was ever and always on his tongue, and he never stretched his hand would anything to a poor body, barrin' three bare times in his whole life. Well, he was dying, and at the very gates of hell, when up comes St. Peter himself, would the kays of heaven in his hand, and says he, Haven't you done three charities in your life, my good man? Yis, says he, your honor's glory, I gave an ould coat wonst to a poor man, an' a stone if patateys to some orphants, the third good turn he couldn't remimber; but St. Peter, at any rate, up and said, thin and there, that for those three good works he'd let him off. Don't you believe it, Miss?"

It was a pleasant change to turn into a Protestant door. I remember visiting the father of a scholar, and he said, "I can tell you why, Miss, that the Roman Catholics don't read the Bible. They dare not! No; for the priests would rather keep them in the dark. They believe anything he says. If he told them that the Douay Bible was a lie, they would believe it. And yet the priests do nothing for them, not a mass for the dead, or the

last rites for the dying, without their money's worth. I know many a one turned out of the chapel 'cause they brought nothing. Rich and poor pay money twice a-year to say masses to get the souls of their relatives out of purgatory. And I'll tell you how people remember the day that their relations die, because of going to pay up the mass-money; and some that you wouldn't think pay five pounds a-year for it." He told me about an orphan girl, a Protestant; her brother came and took her away from his care, pretending to be a Protestant. "When she went to live with him she soon found out his lie; he took all her books away, and burnt them and her Bible. Being ill she went to an hospital, and as she declared she would not live anywhere without a Bible, she got back to us."

A superior woman, married to a Romanist, said to me, "I know what Popery is. It's dreadful how much they make of the Virgin Mary; there's more preached about her than the blessed Saviour, and you'll see more images of her and the saints than of Him, and I often see them go and kneel down to her image. They put Christ aside. It is so deeply rooted in them, that I know many who would deny Christ altogether sooner than give up their belief in the Virgin. And you know they must tell the priest if a Protestant calls on them, or any tract or Bible given. They fear the priest more than God and firmly believe that if he doesn't absolve them, God won't. Oh, it's slavery! I tremble for my poor girls. Many's the sore beat-

ing their father's given them on Sunday for going to church or Sunday school. For four months my poor child kept away from church after a severe beating. One Saturday she went quite humbly to him and said, 'Father, please let me go to church to-morrow.' He said, 'I'll beat you if you do.' After praying about it, my child said, 'Mother, it is God's house, I must please Him first, and come what may I'll go to church.' I was sick at heart for her, but knew she was right, and the father had agreed that the girls should be Protestants. Her father saw her go out to church, but said nothing till she came back, and then followed her up-stairs. I feared his beating her, and said to my boy, 'Won't you take your sister's part for once?' He ran up-stairs and stopped him saying, 'Father, it isn't fair, why should you beat her for going to her church, when mother's so good and works for me though I go to chapel, you'll never drive their hearts to chapel, father!' My poor husband, he doesn't know what he's hindering. He took all the children's prizes, and every Bible away, and locked them up. The poor children and I so longed for a Bible, and kind Mrs. S. lent us one. My girls opened the end of their bolster and slipped it in, so that it might not be seen, and when we knew father was safe at his work, we went up-stairs to read it. After some months, he made a second search and took this away. Now we go up to kind Mrs. S.'s, and read it there."

In answer to a girl rather boastfully telling me

she was in the true Church, and was sure of getting the "last rites," I said, "Tell me, would you be glad to die to-night?"

"Glad to die!" she exclaimed, "shure, no one's ever glad to die, for they don't know where they're goin' after purgatory; but if I had a parlour, and a car to drive about on, I think I'd never ax to die. Well now, Miss, in your country did you ever see any one that wanted to die?"

"Yes, indeed, I could tell you of so many;" and then I told her of Emma Edwards and Lydia Watkins, and repeating the words that made them so glad and ready to go, I said to Biddy, "The same kind Jesus is calling you also; isn't He kind to want you to come to Him? Biddy, He says to you, 'Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.'" Her answer was, "Ah, now, but they are lovely words, and that's the truth."

A little baby having died, I called to see the grandmother who was mourning over the loss. She was anxious to improve the visit to *me*. I give some of her rapid words. "There's my darlint baby died this morning, but she wasn't too good for God. He makes them to take them, shure in my heart I wish I was would her to-day. No crown of goold u'd be worth what she's got. Ah, thin this is the wary world! No peace of mind in it from the queen to the beggar, and no salvation out of the true Church. Why, if my darlint hadn't got the sacrament of baptism she'd never have gone to heaven, never

beheld the presence of God. She'd have gone to a separate place in hell where's there's no torment; an' what will you do, my dear, you're not in the one true Church? Why don't you follow our holy priests alaung? Shure all the angels in heaven isn't as pure and perfect as they are! They are Christ's successors, you must confess to them, and you must receive their absolution. O Mother of God, intercede for her! Thou art the Queen of heaven, pure and holy Virgin, immaculate without spot or stain. Didn't her Son give her all power in heaven and in earth, and isn't she plading for sinners, and shure her Son darn't deny her anything she axes. She commands God. An' if it wasn't for *her* intercession the wicked would be cut off; it's for the sake of the holy Mother of God you're spared. I tell you that if an angel came down straight from heaven and tould me that the Virgin wasn't at the right hand of God intercedin' this present minute, I wouldn't believe him. Shure the divil trimbles at the min-tion of her blessed name. Doesn't she rule over the half of heaven. I know that God the Father is first, but *Mary is next to Him*, and them that don't believe this, do it for filthy lucre's sake. O Mary, pure, spotless, all-powerful, purtect me! O St. Joseph, St. Augustine, St. Bernard (and a dozen more) purtect me! I call on every saint I know every night and mornin' of my life, and I pray to every one of my dear childer gone to them, to pray for me."

To show that this woman and others did not wrongly quote what their Church teaches, I copy from authorised versions.

“Hail, Mary ! Lady and Mistress of the world, to whom all power has been given both in heaven and earth.”—(*Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Mary*, p. 205, approved of by Pope Pius IX.)

“In Mary, finally, we shall find life and eternal salvation.”

“O Lady, . . . in heaven we have but *one advocate*, and that is thyself ; thou *alone* art truly loving and anxious for our welfare.

“O great, exalted, and most glorious Lady, prostrate at the foot of thy throne, *we adore thee* from this valley of tears. We also *consecrate* ourselves to thy service. O Lady, change us from sinners into saints.”—*Glories of Mary*, pp. 124, 158, 376, 377.

“Therefore, with the whole marrow of our hearts, with all the affections of our souls, let us worship this same Mary, because such is the will of Him who willed that we should have all through Mary.”—LESSON vii., from *St. Bernard's Homily on the Nativity of B. V. Mary*.

We will finish our talks with the first visit, and the last, to a very poor, ragged, old woman. I saw her sitting at a cabin door, and the sad, sad look on her face told of a weary heart-load. I sat down by her, much to her surprise, and she said, “Well, no lady ever cared to spake to me, let alone sit in this poor place.”

“I am sure you are very sad ; what is it, dear ?”

"It's the feelin' in mee heart, it's cold, and sore, and waery. I'd like to die out of it, but thin there's the fire waitin' for me, and who'd pay mass for a lone widdy? Who cares for the length I'll burn in purgatory?"

"Yes, some One does care for you, dear, One up there in the blue sky, and He knew that you and I would burn for ever, and He knew that you and I were sinful and lost. Just tell me, what makes you afraid you'll burn for ever?"

"Shure an' it's mee sins a waery load, and only the fire can burn them clane out of me."

"Yes, and my sins are a weary load too, dear, but no fire can burn them clean, no purgatory would take away one sin. The One who loves us is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

"Can you tell me what the Lord Jesus did for us on the cross?"

"No; but He's hangin' in the chapel."

"He died to pay for our sins; you and I have got nothing to pay, and purgatory won't pay for it. Who has the money for saying the masses?"

"Shure, and his riverence tak's all he can get."

"Then you see the money does not go to the Lord Jesus at all. I will read to you just what He said to a poor sinful woman, who was sad and weary like you."

I read to her that priceless chapter, the 7th of St. Luke.

The woman drank it all in as the thirsty ground ; she learnt off the verse, "And when they had *nothing to pay*, he frankly forgave them both."

Even then, that free salvation was largely believed by the weary one, and ever after, she clung to the one ray of light, which had pierced her gloom, that she had "nothing to pay," but Jesus had paid it all for her, that He had forgiven her all the debt, that His blood cleanseth from all sin.

We knelt down, and uninvited, a cripple boy who had been listening, came and knelt, and even a curly-headed Pat of three years old put up his hands, and it was sweet to hear them all saying, "for Jesus Christ's sake."

Some five years passed away, and I was told that "Granny was dying and wouldn't let the priest come to her."

I went. She was lying on a mattress put on the table (a very usual alternative from the earth floor). The daughter said, "It's no use you're speaking to her, Miss ; she knows no one, knows nothing, since she said, 'Don't send for the priest.'"

I knelt by her, took her hand, saying, "Do you know me, Grannie?"

The dying eyes opened, looked at me, and she said, "Know you? yes; and I'll love you for ever, for ever. When they had nothing to pay He frankly forgave them—forgave *me—me!*"

"He gathereth together the outcasts."

“He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill, that he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people.”

“Praise ye the Lord.”

IV.

LYDIA WATKINS.

THE following record is an instance of the entrance of God's Word giving light and understanding to a simple child :—

Lydia's mother was a widow, and night nurse in the Infirmary. Her daughter lived with an Aunt, and attended both Sunday and Day Schools. About the age of fourteen her health failed, and she was admitted as a patient under her mother's care. There were many lady visitors at the Infirmary, and the patients often spoke gratefully of their kind words, and how the books and tracts left by them cheered their weary hours. Nurse Woodward was a great help to such visitors, and would point out any one needing special attention. A frowning nurse would have been a hinderer, but she always welcomed those who came with their Master's Book and their Master's message. Dear old Nurse! many a pillow did she smooth, many a tired head leant on her, and many a word of comfort did she drop into dying ears. And we must

just give here the record of a visit to Nurse when she was pensioned off and living in lodgings.

"There, now, it is you come back at last! and I've been a-worrying and a-praying for you, for fear you'd be lost on that sea. And when you went away, Father went too, and Mrs. Havergal; and you see you all seem like relations to me. You won't go away again? But I did hear Father's last sermon (Nurse never called *him* any other name); and I thought, there, now, he's going, and I shan't understand any one else till he comes back. I always knows what he means, and he speaks *out* like. Now, my dear, sit down; there's your chair; and, see, I've covered it with new chintz, ready for Father to sit on. You'll hear me my two Psalms. I keep spelling them over, fear I should forget."

Nurse was more than seventy-two years old when she first attempted reading. Among the many easy texts she knew by heart her favourite one was, "Fear not thou, worm Jacob." One evening I found Nurse standing and looking at the moon through the chimneys opposite.

She told me that she always put that verse and the moon together. "That big, beautiful moon, hanging up so steady like," was made by Him that made the worms; and she was only a worm, and yet He made her as well as the moon. And He had done more for worms than for the moon: He had shed His blood to redeem them; then how could she fear? Dear Nursey! you are no longer a worm, but a citizen where there is

"no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine."

The patients all loved Nurse; how could they help it? One afternoon she asked me to go to a private ward. The young girl lying there was hopelessly ill. Her name was Lydia Watkins.

It was quite easy to talk to Lydia, for she said more than that disheartening "Yes, yes."

She had evidently been well taught at school, but had not an idea she was a sinner. She willingly found and read with me passages which tell of man's sin and man's danger. (It is generally wiser for visitors not to read *to* those they visit so much as *with* them.) We then read together the 15th chapter of St. Luke, with its threefold finger pointing to that word "Lost."

For many visits we read the Bible together, with earnest prayer that God the Holy Spirit would Himself teach her and make the words her light and her lamp. She always marked the verses, and said that she prayed over them. The first indication of the Holy Spirit's working in her by the word was her remark, "That verse about the lost sheep is like me. I never felt lost before, now I do, and afraid to die, and I can't pray right; but yet I do ask for the Holy Spirit to teach me."

The next visit, no one answered to the knock at Lydia's door. Opening it, the bed was empty. Nurse Woodward came to explain,—

"Don't be frightened, Miss, a fine thing has happened for Lydia. Yesterday a lady from Malvern

came to go round the wards. She was a real lady, her own horses in the carriage, not but I can tell without that. I took her to see Lydia, and of course she was taken with her, and why not? isn't her dear face as pretty as ever any lady was born with, and hasn't she a heavenly look? The lady talked to Lydia, and she wasn't shy and foolish. When we came out, says she, 'Would change of air do that dear child any good, Nurse?' I said it might, and that her mother and the doctor could be asked. It was soon settled that she should go with her to Malvern for a few weeks, and that the lady would put her in clean lodgings. If you'll believe it, the lady took her away in her own carriage then and there. When I was packing her little things, she said, 'Nurse, be sure put my Bible in, and the "Young Cottager" the lady lent me, and tell her I shan't forget to read what she marked in my Bible.'"

Lydia returned in about six weeks. Malvern air had failed to check the cough and other symptoms of consumption. Her breath was shorter, and she was much thinner.

"How did you like Malvern?"

"Very much at first, and I went out in a chair every day, a good way up the hills. It was so pleasant, and the air blew so fresh, I thought I should get well."

"Were you comfortable?"

"Yes, the woman was very kind to me, but of course I missed poor mother, and there was no one

like Nursey. The kind lady came very often, but after a fortnight she was obliged to leave Malvern, and then no one ever came to read with me."

"But I hope you read your Bible, dear?"

"Yes, I did, and prayed for God's Spirit to teach me. And the last verse you said to me, Miss, never left me, 'Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' It seemed like Jesus calling me, and yet I couldn't come, couldn't get to Him, like little Jane did. I was so miserable, and hadn't that *feel* Jane had."

"What do you mean, dear, tell me?"

"I wanted to *feel* that my sins were forgiven, and I don't yet."

"It is not what you feel, dear child, but what the Lord Jesus says here in this Bible. Now look at His own words; here they are, 'Him that cometh'—not him that feels happy, or feels good, or feels forgiven—no, it is just Him that cometh, coming in your heart, because you want Jesus, because He says, Come—coming as you are, lost and sinful. None but God the Holy Ghost can draw you to the Lord Jesus, and help you really to come to Him. We will kneel down and ask that you may indeed come now."

After reading the latter part of the 7th chapter of St. Luke, I left her to His blessed teaching, believing that His word would bring her light and life. There is a point where man's work ends and God's begins.

Nurse met me the next day and said,—

"You'll find Lydia very happy, she says it's a verse that makes her so. She was very ill in the night, and her mother called me up to her. She took my hand, and told me she wasn't a bit afraid to go now, and that perhaps we'd go hand in hand to the gate of heaven. I can't tell you half she said, but that she was clinging to Jesus."

We went into the ward. Lydia was asleep, but presently awoke. Her first words were, "'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' He has helped me to come."

Then she told how that and many other verses now made her quite happy. She thanked me for reading the Bible with her, and that now its light had come into her dark heart.

"Now I feel more afraid to live than die, for fear I should grieve my dear Saviour, I've been such a sinful child; isn't He good to take my sins away! I do want to see Him, indeed I do."

One Sunday, while listening to the church bells, she said,—

"I should like to go to church once more, but it will be better to go up and be close to Jesus always."

This hymn she liked very much :—

"And is the Sabbath come,
And have we still a day,
To mind our everlasting home,
To sing, and read, and pray ?

"Then let us up with speed,
The work is very great ;

And beg of God our soul to feed
With never dying meat.

“That we may strengthened be
To walk the heavenly road ;
Until at last we come to Thee,
Oh everlasting God !

“With Thee for e’er to spend,
With saints in perfect light,
A Sabbath that shall have no end,
A day that has no night.”

—ANON.

Lydia said much that evening of God’s mercy to her.

“How good He’s been to me, an ignorant girl. I wasn’t fit to be forgiven, I wasn’t fit to come to Jesus, and yet He called me, the lost sheep. How good He was to let me come, and He did say to me, ‘Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.’ I’m as happy as little Jane, and know what that means now, ‘Christ here and Christ there.’”

She asked if she was too young to receive the Lord’s Supper, for she had been reading that the Lord Jesus said, “Do this in remembrance of me.” She had thought much about it, and little Jane had wished it too. All that the Lord Jesus said was meant for her, because she did love Him, and He had died for her ; mightn’t she do what He told His disciples to do ?

Lydia told all this to my dear mother, whom she loved very much, asking her to name her wish to Mr. Havergal.

She had not been confirmed, but was truly desirous "to remember the exceeding great love of her Lord and Saviour in thus dying for her."

His servant gladly welcomed such a guest to the Master's table.

One evening "two or three gathered together" in Lydia's room, her mother came, and we knelt by her bed, and ate of that bread, and drank of that cup.

"And Jesus stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when He had so said, He showed unto them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord."

A few days after, Nurse sent to say Lydia was dying. She did not notice me when I came; she was looking up, and she said, as if one was very near her, "Dear Saviour, come, come, and fetch me!"

I can hardly write of what I saw. A light I had never seen before, a holy light, came down on her face again and again. One word only can express it, "Glory."

Once she looked at me, and said, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." And then, "Dear, dear mother, and dear nurse!"

Presently that glory shone on her again, and she said, "Nurse, make room for Him. The Lord Jesus is saying to me, Come. I do hear Him, and I am coming." Yes, He was come, fulfilling His promise, "I will come again, and receive you unto

myself. that where I am, there ye may be
also "

" 'Tis sweet to go ! I would not stay
For ever in this house of clay,
Here pain and languor are my lot,
But where I go, they enter not.

" 'Tis good to quit a world, where sin
Besets my path, and tempts within,
To wear a robe of purity,
And see my Saviour eye to eye.

" Lord Jesus, Thou hast bid me come,
Of all my hopes, Thou art the sum ;
One, one short pang, and I shall rest
For ever on my Saviour's breast."

—REV. W. JOWETT.



V.

THE SOIL PREPARED.

WHILE writing these words, an illustration of them is passing in the field below. From the airy top of a summer house my eye glances on the distant Malvern hills, Woodbury and Abberley rise on the left, the church tower, woods, orchards in blossom spread around. Such a view! Would that all my weary sister-workers in crowded streets and close alleys could share its refreshment, and "rest awhile."

The field below is just prepared for the seed. The clearing, the ploughing, the preparing of the soil is all done, and the sower is now walking up and down, and from his basket scattering the seed.

And is it not so with the good seed of the Word of God? It takes root and brings forth fruit, only in the prepared—the good ground. The great Husbandman always prepares the soil. "So, then, neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God, that giveth the increase."


"The preparation of the heart in man is of the Lord."

The same truth was forcibly told me by an Irish Scripture reader. Inquiring, whether he found it best to fix beforehand, what passage of Scripture to read in his daily rounds, he told me that, though he always carefully read over some chapter, he felt more anxious that the Lord would direct him *where* to sow the seed. "Every morning I pray the Lord to prepare the soil in some heart for the good seed. I do not know which heart it may be, but I trust that to my Master. So I go out, being quite sure His word will not return to Him void. That's why some listen, and I've had wonderful proofs that the Lord goes and works on the heart first, and then sends me with the seed."

That good man's sowing time was very short. His history may be shortly given. A few years ago a crowd gathered round a preacher in one of the back streets of Dublin. The preacher was discouraged by their apparent inattention and restlessness, and for many months knew not of the following result.

Within hearing stood a policeman keeping order. The seed was sown in his heart, he received it, he brought forth fruit.

Soon after illness came on, and he had leave to go to his native place. There the policeman told his old neighbours what great things the Lord had done for his soul. A tinker listened among others, and again and again he went to the sick police-



man's cottage to hear the "old, old story," so new to him. He was a Romanist, but the entrance of God's word giveth light, and soon it chased away all the darkness, and the tinker was brought into His marvellous light. He could read, and soon got possession of a Bible. Soon he began to tell others the good news of salvation. For five years all his spare time was spent in going from cabin to cabin, speaking of Jesus Christ, the One Priest, the One Mediator, the One Sacrifice. And then the strong desire came, to give himself up, wholly and entirely, to the Lord's work. The result was (for this is mere outline), that the tinker was appointed by the Scripture Readers' Society to a mission post in Ireland. His labour was short, and the faithful servant was quickly called home to rest.

But his remark has often encouraged me amid the toil of unsuccessful labour. "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Direct me to those who are crying, "Come and help us." "Open Thou my lips" are the cries of His servants. And let His servants also cry, "Lord, open my ear to know Thy will." How useless is a deaf servant, toiling and hurrying about his work, doing it his own way, heedless of the Master's voice, and so leaving undone the very work that would have brought him glory. Oh, to be swift to hear, and quick to see, our Master's work, to be ever ready in season, and out of season, to do His will!

The Scripture reader's advice cheered me one morning after completing a round of very dis-

heartening visits. There was only one cottage more, and as new comers were there, the thought came, "Perhaps there is prepared ground here." And so it was. The stranger seemed pleased with the offer of tracts, adding, "Perhaps they will suit my case. I have had all these given me at times, and I have stitched them together," showing me quite a thick collection.

"And do none of these suit your case?"

"No, Miss, if you would please to listen, I feel a burden on me, a weight that, do what I will, I can't get rid of. I know that I am out of Christ, that my soul is not safe."


"And have you felt this long?"

"Not very. I have always kept to my church regular, and thought I had done no particular sin more than other people; but now I feel the worst of all—such a sinner. I can't even sleep at night, there is such a weight of sin on me."

"What first made you feel so? had you read or heard anything to alarm you?"

"Yes, one evening I read the chapter with this verse, 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?' It seemed to stick to me, I had neglected it, it's too late to escape. I have thought so ever since, is it so?"

"Oh no, it is not too late to escape, that warning verse is to arouse you to flee from the wrath to come, and God's own word says, "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."



"Well, Miss, I'll do all as ever I can, I would do anything to be saved."

"My friend, your doing will do nothing; the Lord Jesus has done all for your salvation. Your sins are like a debt; you have been trying to pay that debt yourself, but I trust God, the Holy Spirit, will teach you that you have nothing to pay, because His precious blood has paid it all. But will you find your Testament, and we will together read what the Lord Jesus said to a woman, who felt her sins a heavy debt as you do? He is the same kind Saviour still, and just what He said to her He says to all who come."

We read the seventh chapter of St. Luke's Gospel from verse 37, and afterwards earnestly prayed that God's Holy Spirit might teach her to believe His own word.

Again her visitor called, but found her in much the same state of mind, convinced of sin and longing for deliverance.

She said, "I cannot rest with this weight of sin on me, and if I think myself wicked, what must the great and holy God see me to be? I want an evidence, Miss, that He'll forgive me, how can I I know it? I want the *feeling* He's forgiven me."

"My friend, you are looking for evidences and feelings in yourself, and you will never find them there. It is God's promises, God's word—those blessed words that the Lord Jesus said to all that are weary and heavy laden like you, that you must

trust and believe. Have you read the chapters I marked for you?"

"Yes, I have, over and over, and I am so glad you put me upon reading. I kept waiting for some evidence to come in my mind, and I think God has sent you to make His way plainer to me. I told my husband how glad I was you came with the tracts, and advised me to read my Bible."

"And is sin still a burden to you?"

"Oh yes, and a heavy one, too."

Tears showed the reality. Again we opened our Bibles, praying for the Holy Spirit's teaching, while we read the comfortable words of the Lord Jesus to all who truly turn to Him, in Matt. xi. 27-30.

But she shall tell herself how great things the Lord did for her, and how His word comforted her. It was some time before I called again, and finding her busy washing, said I would not come in.

"But I have so much to tell you, please do come in, I am so happy now. God's Holy Spirit is teaching me. I had been looking for evidences and a sign, now I see that it is what Jesus said. When I read my Testament now, it seems as if He was talking to me in it, as if the Lord spoke it all to me like. As soon as I believed what Jesus said was to me, all my grief seemed gone. Every verse brings me comfort; it all seems new to me; and because it is written, I believe that 'this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of

whom I am chief.' I had often heard that Jesus died ; now I've got an interest in His death, it was for me. I have been meditating in particular on those words, 'It is finished,' and I see He did all, finished all for me. I am ashamed to think how blind I have been for years, trying to save myself, saying my prayers and trying to be good, but I was turning my back on Him. I can't thank and praise Him enough, that now He has forgiven all my sins. And I do thank Him for sending you to call on me."

Another time she related a remarkable escape :—
"Since you called I was in great danger. I was winding up a bucket of water at the well, the chain got loose, and, in my fright, I let go the windlass ; it struck me on the head, and I fell, senseless, all but down the well. It is seventy feet deep, and there I must have died ; no one hardly comes by my door. I do not know how long I lay there, but at last I got into the house, and then fainted again. There was no one to come to me ; if it had happened a few weeks ago, how frightened I should have been, but I felt 'the Lord is my helper.' Yes, I feel quite safe, the Lord loves me and I love Him, not that I love Him as I want to, and now I am so happy after prayer. I think 'He is the eternal God,' not changing like me. When I read His word, I feel there is no mixture in His promises, it is the Lord's word only. And wherever I open my Bible, it all seems such loving words, I can't pass one by like. How thankful I am that


God sent you with the tracts that morning, and to point me to the Word. Will you please to look at this old book, it was my poor mother's. I have often seen her cry over it. There's one part on 'our loving Saviour,' you can see where her tears fell over and over again on this leaf. It is in 'Come to Jesus,' Newman Hall's. My mother died very happy. For a long time I feared to die, and trembled at the thought, now the fear is all gone."

Finding she had not read any Gospel through, I advised her to begin with St. Matthew. She was quite interested with the reason of all the hard names being put there. She said, "I often wondered how clergymen could read them any way, and I thought they were all the names of the children of Israel."

She remarked, on the words, "She shall bring forth a Son," "Because sin came by woman, so Christ came by a woman to put Satan lower and lower." We turned to Genesis iii. 15, and Isaiah vii. 14.

It is very seldom that the poor know how to use a reference Bible, and it is pleasant to see the interest it gives them to explain it, and show them how often the New Testament is the key to the Old.

Before my next visit, which was the last, clouds had arisen. She said, "I have had some dark temptations. How can such a sinner be saved? Am I His child? Then I go again to the Word, and I can't tell you, dear lady, what light comes to me from that. Every verse has so much in it, it



seems as if the Holy Spirit took the light from the Word, and put it in my heart. It's an amazing thought that ever He should have enlightened me. I am a wonder to myself. A wonder that He woke me, for it was waking me from death. Yes, for years I was dead. Oh, how kind the Lord is to let His word come to me. I hope you'll point many others to the Word."

The last chapter we read together was the first message, which fell on "the soil prepared." "And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both." "But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it, which also beareth fruit." "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Another instance of the soil being prepared, and therefore bringing forth good fruit, was the case of a young girl attending a night school and a Sunday class. The instruction there given by a diligent, but often discouraged teacher, rapidly grew up, and, in due season, ripened into pleasant fruit. Lizzie was one of the most regular attendants; however wet the night, however bright the Sunday afternoon, however few came through the rain, or resisted the enticement of Sunday strolling, Lizzie was always there. Beyond this, there was no hopeful indication; silently, deeply, the soil was prepared, and the seed sown by the means, though without the knowledge, of her teacher. Lizzie

belonged to an unpromising family, with no home influence or example to help her. Visitors often overlook some "little one" of the Lord's flock in this naughty world, passing by the very door which they think hopeless, but where the Lord has work for them to do. During the absence and illness of her own teacher, Lizzie sent a message to say she was ill. I found she had a bad cough, and evidently some latent disease. During several visits nothing particular passed; she read with me a verse in turn (which ensures far more attention than reading *to* a person); she was silent and attentive.

One afternoon her mother said, "Oh, I am so glad you are come, Lizzie has been telling us all that she is so happy."

When I sat down by her bed, she said, "I am so happy, I've had such a happy afternoon, I've been with Jesus all the time. He took me with Him to a fountain, oh it was so beautiful, and He washed my feet."

I was silent, feeling it a difficulty—Was this mere feeling, or was the Holy Spirit showing her of Jesus? "Were you dozing, Lizzie?"

"No, I was wide awake; I did see Jesus and the fountain."

"It is only by faith, Lizzie, we can see the Lord Jesus here, but it is quite true there is a fountain. You have often sung the hymn at school, 'There is a fountain filled with blood.'"

Then we read together the thirteenth chapter of St. John, and Zechariah xiii. 1. We talked about

it, as I wished to ascertain if she clearly distinguished between the literal fact of washing the feet, and the invisible washing of the soul in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Her answers were simple and satisfactory, "Yes, I do believe that the Lord Jesus has washed my sins away; for a long time I have prayed, 'Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.'" Over and over she said, "Oh, I am so happy, Jesus has washed me." Thus, as a little child, she believed, and believing, she rejoiced with joy unspeakable.

Her deeply loved and absent teacher, who was ill and suffering, was often inquired for, and frequent reference made to what she had learnt in her school. A "Silent Comforter," belonging to that teacher, was hung on her bed, and left open at the verse, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Lizzie voluntarily learnt all that page, and many others.

Reading to her Luke xv. 1-7, and quoting, as a reference, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost," Lizzie said, "I like that verse; Miss W. read it to me yesterday, and I thought about it all night." One true sign of spiritual life was most evident in her thirst for and delight in God's Word. "As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word," so did Lizzie.

Another indication was anxiety for the souls of others. Once, when I had prayed with her, and said "Amen," she said, earnestly, "If you are not tired, Miss, will you pray again, it never tires me. I

like to pray to Him, and I want you to pray for my poor mother and father. Mother is very good to me, but I am afraid she hasn't come to Jesus. Do pray for them all." Very often was this wish repeated, and sometimes she would herself pray aloud for her parents, and sisters, and brothers, that they might all come to Jesus.

She spoke gratefully of her school. "Oh, that was a beautiful school. I did so love to go. I often cried if I couldn't go. Sometimes I have been the only one there on a fine Sunday afternoon, and it was so nice. I did love Miss C.'s teaching. If I get well, I shall like to go again to my school. It vexed me when, after she had been teaching us so beautiful, some of the girls would come out laughing and singing; it was a shame, how could they do it? Things that teacher said come back to me now and comfort me."

Doubtless, God's Holy Spirit accompanied that earnest teacher's work, and Lizzie was the first-fruits from a discouraging class.

Lizzie's answer to her visitor's inquiries was, "I lie and think of Jesus, and how He loves me, and I love Him."

"Yes, dear child, He loved you first. 'We love Him, because He first loved us.'"

She seemed to grasp that verse, and ever after held it fast; it was Lizzie's anchor. At this time she was very suffering, but rarely spoke of herself, unless questioned, and then would add,—

"Jesus is so good to me, He helps me to lie still.

I like mother and all of them to leave me alone often, that I may think of Him. When I can't read, many verses I have learnt come in my mind and comfort me."

She was not at all shy, and would ask questions ; such a welcome contrast to the constant "yes, yes," which visitors too often hear. This evening, she said,—

"Can you tell me how to pray more, I want to tell Jesus more, but I haven't got the gift to pray?"

"Prayer is *asking* and *telling*, dear child. Ask your heavenly Father for all you want through the Lord Jesus Christ. You need not use hard words or keep to collects. If you wanted to ask your father for something, you would not look in a book first to see how to say it. 'If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.' Do you remember how often the disciples came and told the Lord Jesus what things had happened to them, told Him when they were afraid on the sea, told Him all their troubles. And so may you tell Jesus. Tell Him, when you feel impatient, tell Him when you can hardly bear the pain, tell Him that you love Him and want to love Him more, tell Him that you want your father and mother to love Him, tell Him, above all, that you want the Holy Spirit to teach you to pray. The Lord Jesus knew that we should not be able of ourselves to pray well, and so He promised the Holy Spirit should teach us how to pray and to help our infirmities. Shall we now

pray together and tell the Lord Jesus we want the Holy Spirit to teach us both how to pray."

When leaving her, she said,

"Oh, I should like to go to Jesus to-night. I don't want to get well. It's a naughty world, I would rather go to Jesus, I should so love to go to Him."

One sultry evening in July, I found Lizzie very ill, and oppressed with heat. Some aromatic vinegar had been given me for mission use. I mixed some with water, and sponged her face and neck and hands. She kept saying, "Beautiful, beautiful." (This and Eau de Cologne is a most acceptable gift. A clean soft pocket handkerchief with the novelty of scent has often given more pleasure than would be supposed, and a little bottle left by the bedside is refreshing to the weary invalid in the close heavy atmosphere.) Then she said, "Please read to me about Jesus, I lies and thinks about Him, and how He loves me."

1 John iv. 14 to end was read. She inquired affectionately for her absent teacher, saying, "If I am not spared to see Miss C., I shall meet her in heaven."

Then Lizzie asked me to sing; her favourite hymns were, "I heard the voice of Jesus say," to my father's tune "Evan," "There is a Happy Land," and "Oh, that will be joyful." It is often pleasant and resting to an invalid to sing softly to them, choosing their old familiar hymns and tunes. Old people especially, who may have been shut up for

years from the house of the Lord, are always cheered to hear once more the glorious *Te Deum* chanted, or "My soul doth magnify the Lord." The Old Hundreth never fails to delight them, and many a feeble voice have I heard joining in the well-known tune. One aged sufferer quite clapped her hands the first time I sang for her, exclaiming, "Ah, that's it. The same as I sang when I was a 'girl. I couldn't start it by myself, please sing it again, again!"

"The Ministry of Song" has a practical verse which I have often seen realised:—

"Sing at the cottage bedside,
They have no music there,
And the voice of praise is silent
After the voice of prayer.
Sing of the gentle Saviour
In the simplest hymns you know,
And the pain-dimmed eye will brighten
As the soothing verses flow.
Better than loudest plaudits
The murmured thanks of such,
For the King will stoop to crown them
With His gracious 'Inasmuch.'"

F. R. H.

July 14.—The intense heat was very trying to poor Lizzie; sponging and fanning much refreshed her. Her legs were swollen and painful, and for some time her right side had been paralysed, so that she was very helpless. She showed me some strawberries and cakes Mrs. F. had sent, but she owned the gift as His. "See how good the Lord Jesus is to me, He sent me all these nice things.

I shouldn't have had them if He hadn't put it in her heart to send them."

Though no longer able to sing, she asked for a hymn, beating time with her thin hand, and looking so happy. Then she listened to the first chapter of the 1st of Peter. We dwelt especially on our being redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, and, therefore, He would keep what He had bought. Her cough was almost incessant, and with some difficulty she said,—

"Tell me what to say to the Lord Jesus, the last thing; I like to tell Him something before I go to sleep."

"Ask Him to fill you with the Holy Ghost, He so often told us to ask for the Holy Spirit."

And surely it was His teaching which filled her with holy longing to depart and be with Christ; again and again she said, "Oh, I long to go, when it's Jesus' time to tell me to come. I lie and wait for Him to say, 'Lizzie, come.' I should like to go to Jesus, I should, I should," and the tears came.

July 20.—Lizzie seems kept in perfect peace and in the full assurance that the Lord Jesus loved her "first," that He had washed her whiter than snow, and that she was going to Him very soon. Again she spoke of her parents and her desire that they might be saved. Prayer that the Lord would open her mouth to speak to them, was specially answered, and other friends and neighbours said, "We can never forget what Lizzie said to us; she *was* happy." "She was full of Jesus," said one poor man.

July 21.—Before eight o'clock this morning, I went to say good-bye to Lizzie. She said, "I am so sorry you are going away. I shall miss you; but are you going to see my dear Miss C.?"

"No, dear child, but what message will you send?"

"My love, my kind love I mean, and I shall meet her in heaven. I am so glad I came to her school."

There was only time to pray and commend her to Him who first loved her, and would love her even unto the end. And her short journey was all but over, and home in sight. Kind visitors were daily with her, and they could tell of her joy and peace in believing.

One wrote, "Lizzie was too ill to speak much, but she said, 'Miss H. knows that Jesus loves me, and that I love Jesus.'" Another visitor, M. C., who had also been a most efficient and kind teacher in the night-school which Lizzie attended, now saw the quick ripening of the seed sown in tears. She took care that every little want was supplied, and once sent a messenger four miles to try and procure in July the invalid's wish for pork pie. This teacher relates that Lizzie's deathbed was most beautiful. "She never seemed to take in any fear, she was kept in such perfect peace, it was all 'Jesus.' If we asked her, Had she any fear of death? she seemed to wonder that any one could fear to go to Jesus. I remembered a most eminent Christian telling me on her deathbed she did not think any

one could see Death without some fear, and that even an excellent clergyman, who had lived and laboured abundantly for Christ, had expressed a fear of death, and though that fear never came, for he died in his sleep, yet here was this dear child longing to go without any fear at all. Yes, it was beautiful to hear her say, 'It's all Jesus, Jesus.' Though she suffered very much and was often in great pain, yet she never complained, never talked about herself or her sufferings. The day that she died her own absent teacher, Miss C., had sent a letter to Lizzie. I went with it early, but as I could not go up stairs then, I called again, directly after morning church. She was dying, her hands and her feet were blue and cold, yet she looked so happy. I told her that Miss C. had sent her a letter; she listened to every word, never taking her eyes from me. I was afraid she would not understand the letter was hers, but as I put it near, her dying hand feebly tried to grasp it, and she whispered 'Mine.' When I had read it, I thought she would be too tired to hear the references read, but she wished me to go on. Her eyes looked brightly upward as I read to her Rev. vii. 14. I said, 'Lizzie, you will soon have one of those white robes; and a crown, and no more poverty and pain;' she said most earnestly, 'Yes, oh yes.' Those little words seemed easier for her to get out. The last verse that I read to her was, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.' Her dying message to her teacher Miss C. was, 'Give my best love

to her and tell her that I shall meet her in—
heaven.’

“She still looked happy, and never lost that smile and look of peace which I had always noticed. When I went away, she whispered, ‘Good bye, God bless you.’”

THE TEACHER'S LETTER TO LIZZIE.

“MY DEAR LIZZIE,—I must write and tell you how very constantly I think of you on your bed of suffering. It grieves me more than I can say that I cannot be near you, but my comfort is to know that Jesus is with you, that He has washed you from all your sins and gathered you as His own lamb into His fold. You can tell to others now how true is what I have often said, that it is far better to have Jesus for your own Saviour and Friend, than all this world can give. The world can't help you now, dear Lizzie, can it? but Jesus has *saved* you, and He is with you every moment to help and comfort you in all your pain. Soon He will take you to that bright happy home He has gone to prepare for His own.

“I have just been reading something about that blessed home in the seventh chapter of Revelation. Dear M. C. (who brings you this letter) will read it to you. It always makes me long so much to be there. Oh, how thankful we should be to that dear Saviour, who has suffered so much and died for us, that we might go there. In the 14th verse we are told who it is that will be there. ‘Those who have washed their robes and made them white in the

blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God.' So, dear Lizzie, if you have come to Jesus, as I believe you have, and He has washed you in His precious blood, as He does all who come to Him, then you have indeed cause to be happy, for you may be sure that He will be with you in the valley of the shadow of death, and carry you safely to His glorious home, where 'there will be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.' (Rev. xxi. 14.)

"It makes me very sad to think of not seeing you again in this world, but we must look forward to meeting in heaven, and you will be there to welcome me. Keep looking to Jesus, dear Lizzie, and remember always that He loves you and has washed you from your sins in His own blood, and He will never leave you.—Good bye. I am always your affectionate friend and teacher,
E. C."

During this last Sunday afternoon several came in to see Lizzie. To her clergyman she said, "I'm not afraid to die. I'm going to Jesus." She said as much as her strength would allow to one of her schoolfellows, begging her to "look to Jesus" and "try and follow Him."

Very often had she spoken to her father and mother, and again with dying breath she said, "Come to Jesus." Her mother says she was sensible and happy to the very last moment. She quietly fell asleep in Jesus, on Sunday evening, August 1, 1869, aged seventeen years.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

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VI.

GEORGE AND RHODA'S STORY.

GEORGE and Rhoda lived at Laney Green. She was his third wife. At the time that George told me his history, he was very infirm, seldom leaving his arm chair. He was a Wesleyan, but as long as he could walk, always came to church in the morning. He deeply valued the sermons preached there, and would remark, "That was a wonderful discourse, bless the Lord for such a light in the church."

George and Rhoda were always invited to the parsonage on New Year's Day, when all the old people and widows came to dinner. After dinner their pastor would sing and play some simple strain for them, and then leave his harmonium to younger fingers. It was pleasant to watch the effect of music on the aged guests, some beating time with their hands and feet, some motionless with delight and wonder as "Comfort ye," "O rest in the Lord," and "Whom having not seen, ye love," were sung for them. The scene might add another verse to "The Ministry of Song."

Then all joined in some well-known hymns, and the Worcestershire Christmas carol,

“How grand and how bright,
That wonderful night.”

Rhoda's comment was, “’Tis wonderful! We can't play on that music, but up there we'll all have a golden harp a piece.”

After the singing their pastor addressed them with words of comfort and warning. Then George was always the chosen spokesman, and rising, would make a hearty speech, with “thanks for all favours, and prayers for all blessings on their dear pastor and his partner.” Her gifts of books and comforters closed the New Year's party. George was not able to come to our last gathering, he was weak and ill, and daily thought he was “just going over Jordan.” And he longed to go, death had no terror for him, he knew he should then see Him face to face.

George had often told me scraps of his early life, and they were so interesting, that I took pencil and paper to note down his story more carefully. Wishing to divert his attention whilst arranging my papers, that he might not observe my reporting, I showed him a coloured print of Canterbury Cathedral in the “Sunday at Home.” He wondered how ever such a big place could be built, or even thought of, and after examining it some time, said, “That is a grand place, but it's not so grand as this little fireside corner and my arm chair, for His glory shines here, that's the grandeur! it's Christ's pre-

sence makes a temple. Jacob had only one stone, and yet he said, 'This is the house of God and the gate of heaven.'" The old man shut up the book and told me of the many bright Sundays, when, in that little corner, the Lord drew near and was unto him "as a little sanctuary."

George was quite pleased to tell me his story, Rhoda was away, and he should not look at the clock so often, if his visitor would be pleased to sit a long time with him. His story shall be given without the interruption of the necessary remarks and questions, and as nearly as possible in his own words, saving the incommunicable Staffordshire dialect.

GEORGE'S STORY.

"It is many years ago since the Lord brought me out of darkness into His light. Better than forty years; and yet it all seems before me like as if it were yesterday. At that time I had the care of a team of horses, not on a farm, but for drawing goods or stones. I had good wages, but as I says, waggoners' money is like sodgers' money, it comes and it goes, and you're none the better for it. I was sadly too fond of drink; many's the time, to my shame, has it overcome me. I seldom went to church or chapel, for when a man's tied to a team he's little thought for Sunday. I've often gone forty miles on the Lord's day. My wife had more sense and headpiece than I had, and she came to this conclusion, 'George, if you won't give up that

team and get a better master, I'll give up this house and go into lodgings, or go to service.' It put me about, and I didn't like her conclusion at all. But it fell out the master had words with me about the team, the first time for eight years, and he cursed me, so I left his service. We then came to live at Laney Green, with my father. Mother was dead, and badly he had used her, for he was a drunkard. The Green was an awful wicked place, it was notable for the poor wives being leathered and thwacked. Often I've heard the poor women's cries. One night my poor father came home drunk and began to leather my wife. Said I, 'If she's to be leathered, I'll do it myself.' So we soon left my father and took this cottage. It's true I was jeered at and called a woman's man, but I always found my wife's conclusions the best. It was a very dark place then, and my soul was darker still.

"One evening a child came round to all the houses, to tell us a missioner from Lunnun was coming, and there would be preaching that night. My wife said, 'Let us go;' and knowing her conclusions were always best, I said, 'Yes, we will.' We did go, and we were both caught that night. I can't tell which of us was caught first, but she told me her first prayer was, 'Lord, reach my husband,' and my first cry was, 'Lord, have mercy on my poor wicked father.' I shall never forget that night. The preacher was a home missioner, sent from London to Cannock and to go round some of the villages near. He was a Frenchman, but spoke as

good English as any parson in a pulpit. He took his text from Mark xvi. 16: 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.' 'Oh,' said I, 'he's preaching to none but me, why that man knows all about my sins!' All my sins rose up before me, staring me in the face.

"I came away crying, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' Soon after the missionary called on me; I said,—

"‘Sir, it's no use your coming to me, I am too vile to be saved, I'm lost.’

"His answer was, 'The Lord has sent me to tell you quite different. "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."'

"I can never forget that man; when you've tasted the sweetness, you can't help loving the one that brings you the message. Since then the Lord has never suffered me to draw quite back, nor taken His Holy Spirit from me. He has always this gracious word for me, 'Fear not, thou worm Jacob.'"

Old George seemed tired, so we said good-bye, and went to hear the rest of his story another day, as follows :

"The missionary stayed a long time at Cannock. When he left, quite a stripling out of a Sunday school came to read chapters for me, as I was no scholar. Through thick and thin, snow and rain, did he come to his time, once a week. The old cottage in which we lived tumbled down, and then

we came to live in this one. My poverty and other matters often cumbered me and threw me back, but the Lord never left me. He gave me grace to start afresh, whenever I backslided from Him. My wife was a much stouter Christian than I was. Satan could throw me down long before he could her, and I always acknowledged it. My first wife was a capital reader, better than my good little Rhoda there. I tell her she is as much at a loss for a letter as some ministers are over their words, when they can't express all they want to in the pulpit. Time went on, and my poor wife sickened and died. Almost the last talk we had was this, by her bedside. She said, 'George, I am going, but it's going home. I leave you with three children as can do for themselves, and three as can't. May God give you grace to train them aright; and, George, don't marry again till the children are grown up, it might bring discord.' I believe I promised her I would not. She died with a smile and a kiss.

"A fortnight after she was buried, I heard my wife's voice. I was lying awake about four o'clock. She called 'George, George!' I looked up, and she was leaning over me. It was her features somehow, and yet it was a glorified spirit. Ah, she was in a bloom! I've heard ministers speak of angels and glorified spirits in their sermons, and I have said to myself, 'You only get half-way to what a glorious spirit is, I've seen a deal more of one than you.' I've seldom mentioned what she said. I tried to

speak to her, but I heard a rustle, and she was gone.

"After my wife's death, I fetched my eldest girl home to take care of the house and children. Many were my trials, but the Lord led me on.

"About six years after, I married again. I believe it was ordered for me. My second wife was a widow, and had been a schoolmistress. She was a scholar, and a truer churchwoman could not be found in Cannock. She was very sharp at the books, and a bit sharp in her temper too sometimes. The young stripling from the Sunday school was grown a man now. He still came to our cottage, and I got two or three benches for the neighbours to come in when he read and prayed. It might teach them not to leather their wives. Though my wife was such a scholar, she was brought in at one of these readings. I remember the evening. I was at work in the garden, and she called,—

"‘George, George, come and put the benches and chairs for the reading to-night, I am too busy.’

"I went. She said, ‘I wish the reading was over, I am dreading it.’

"‘Indeed,’ said I, ‘why, it always rejoices me.’

"‘Well, George, I must say that man seems to go on against me; he seems to think I am a sinner, worse than others.’

"I said nothing, but went up the road to meet him, and said, ‘The battle’s half won with my wife, don’t give in, speak out in the Master’s name.’

"He thanked me, and said he had been praying in particular for my wife.

"After all were gone, she cried a good deal. I said, 'What ails thee, wife?'

"'Why, George, I see it now, I am the biggest sinner that ever was. For years I have read the Bible, and heard good sermons, but never till to-night did I see myself a sinner.'

"I have been trying to bring to my mind's eye the passage of Scripture that was read that night, but I can't. It was a quick work in her. Her temper mended uncommon. She was soon sent for. Hers was a happy, happy death. I sat watching by her when the last came. I said,—

"'Tell me how it is with you, for I see you are just entering in.'

"She heaved both her hands up, and said, 'Bless the Lord, all is well, all is well.'"

George's story must be unfinished. Rhoda's will supply the event of his third marriage. He is gone home at last, but I never heard how he passed through the valley. The verse that he loved so well, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob," is doubtless exchanged for the "Fear not, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

RHODA'S STORY.

"My father and mother were very godly, and many a prayer they put up for their large family,

that all might be led to know the Lord. My father had great faith that his prayer would be answered, even if he never lived to prove it. He believed none of us would be missing. Before he died, two of us were called in, but the most of us were outside still. The clergyman often visited him, and I remember the last time he saw father's happy death-bed, he said, 'Oh, what a joyful death! it has preached me such a sermon!'

"My mother went to him and said, 'Is your soul steadfast still?'

"He took her hand and said, 'Ay, steadfast in the Lord, for He's kept me to the end. There are only a few more grains of sand in my hour-glass, they will soon run out, and then—I shall be with Jesus.'

"My father seemed sometimes overpowered with joy, and he seemed to look on death as the biggest joy. My poor mother lived a long time after his death. She died quite as safe, but in the midst of such agony and inflammation. She had a smile for Him when He called her, and I saw it too. I was crying by her bed; she said, 'Rhoda, don't cry for me, cry for yourself, and don't trifle any longer, get ready, child, for the Master. He's come, and I am ready.' That was her last word to me, but I did not heed it then. At the Sunday school many a call had come to me, but it all seemed lost upon me. My father's faith and my father's prayers weren't to be lost. I married; my husband was in the right road before me. It was a dream that

alarmed me. I dreamt I saw my mother, and she said again to me, 'Don't trifle any longer, Rhoda, get ready for the Master.' An hangel was following her, and I thought he said, 'Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.' With that, I woke. I knew it was only a dream. But that verse stuck to me. I woke my husband, and asked him to get up and pray for me. He did. The next Sunday the preacher gave out this text, 'Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.' I thought, 'This is no dream now, this is the Lord calling me.'

"For many weeks I was very miserable, till one night, as I was on my knees, peace came. I can compare it to nothing else but a weight falling off. It's more than thirty years ago, but that lightsome day is clear before me. Ah, I thought then I should always be in that joyful mind. I was to be left, and proved and sifted, but the Lord smiled again and again. Yes, it was those words opened my eyes, 'Now is the accepted time;' I was quite in the dark before that.

"Father's prayer was answered for John next. I doated on that brother; when we were little, we were like two lambs together. His end was very sudden. He worked in a coal-pit. The last Sunday it seemed as if he knew he was going, and was getting all ready. He went to a prayer-meeting quite early, and when he came to breakfast he got his Bible. At dinner-time it was the same; at last his wife said—

“‘Why, John, what’s come over thee? it’s nothing but praying and reading to-day.’

“He said, ‘I can’t tell how it is, wife, but perhaps I mayn’t be long here, and I would rather be praying while I can.’

“At nine o’clock the next morning he was killed in the pit. But his lamp was alight, and his loins girded, and so father had one more to meet him up there.

“My first husband and I lived very happy together some years. After his death troubles came thick, but my faith seemed to grow thick too. It seemed that when I told the Lord what I wanted, He put it in some one’s heart to give it me. I had unknownst friends raised up. Bread didn’t come to me in ricks and heaps, but my Father always sent enough. My son worked for me till he took an inflammation. I was in a strait then. I prayed and asked the Lord what to do. In the course of the day I thought I would go up to the hall. I was not unknown to them, but, of course, they didn’t know my troubles. Next morning I took my youngest boy with me, he was very sickly too. I had been up to the house, but never went into so many rooms before. I was sent for into my lady’s dressing-room. She was handsome, and so tall. Her little girl was by her, with her hair all down, like a shock of gold corn, and her colour like a rose.

“The lady asked me all about my affairs, as kind as if she were my equal. She spoke to me of

better things, too, if I went to a place of worship, and if I had a Bible.

"I told her I had no Bible, and that I could not read.

"Then she sent her maid to take me to have something to eat, and I was to go to her again for the Bible. She said some one could read it to me. There it is, and there's her own 'M. V. G.' in it. It's almost wore out, but it's a lamp to my soul.

"When I went to the lady again for the Bible, it was in a room they called the library. It was stacked all round with books. I was quite struck with those stacks of books. There was another lady sitting there, she seemed weakly, but had such a heavenly smile. Those sisters were a pair! She noticed my little boy looking so pale, and went and picked a wonderful flower for him from some pots in the window. They said he was very thin, and asked if I ever gave him some arrowroot. I said it was unknownst to me. The lady sent for as much as two pounds of it, and, more than that, told me how to make it. It was the best medicine I ever gave the child, and it brought him round. There was one bit of advice the lady gave me. She said she was pleased to see me so clean and decent, that the patches on my gown were quite a credit to me, but she didn't like the bead trimming and flowers on my bonnet, that beads and patches didn't match very well. She said it so mild, I thanked her; and when I got in the lane, I sat down on a bank and pulled them off. To be

sure I had put them on years before, thinking to please Daniel. Then I went on home, passing by the school-house the good lady had built in her own park for the poor children. It's been a fold for many a silly, straying lamb. My lady cared for the poor, because she cared for the Lord. Those good ladies have long gone to their rest, but they ain't forgot. You may see their writing in many a Bible besides mine, and old Hampton kept the marker in the very Psalm her hand put it to his dying day. I shall see them again, though, in the rooms of the Mansion, that will be better dressed than even the rooms at the hall.

"Some years after this my poor boy had an accident, and the doctor said it was impossible for him to live.

"'But, sir,' said I, 'I have prayed to the Lord for his life, and I have faith to believe he will live.'

"'Believe on,' he said, 'if you like.'

"'I did believe on, and he did live, and is a comfort to me now.'

"One day even my loaf was gone, and I really had not a penny to buy more. I had to go to H—— hall that day for an hospital ticket. I prayed before I went.

"The little girl I had seen so blooming by her mother's side was a lady now. She came to me, for she took after those noble ladies, and cared for the poor. She gave me the ticket. Then the housekeeper brought me a blanket and a sheet, which

the lady sent for my sick boy. I could not help saying my heavenly Father must have told her that I wanted these worse than anything, for I had never mentioned it.

"I came away with these presents, but still I knew there was no bread at home. As I walked down Hilton Lane, under the tall trees, I heard the rooks talking away in the branches. I could not tell what they said, and yet it seemed as if they cawed, 'Fear not, consider the fowls of the air, your Father feeds them.' Just then I looked down and saw a piece of paper in the road. I took it up. There was one shilling and sixpence wrapped up. At first I thought why an hangel has dropped this for me, then I thought they've nothing to do with our money—it's sent someway by my Father, for I prayed to Him about my empty cupboard. Of course I asked if any one had lost it, but no one claimed it, so my prayers were more than answered.

"When I had been a widow some years, I lighted upon George. He was old, and wanted a nurse, and I wanted a fireside, and some one to care for me. So it seemed as if the Lord put us together to comfort one another on the last bit of the road home. We've been married seven years. George has got on faster to the kingdom than ever before. Affliction has rubbed down his temper. I can see the grace of God shining in him, and many happy hours we have together in our little cot. 'The Lord is with us, and He is enough!'

VII.

SUSAN HARRIS; OR, "FRUIT IN DUE SEASON."

It is sometimes pleasanter to look back on things past than to look on things present. As when journeying on some hot and dusty day we hardly enjoy the scenery, and glance weariedly even at shady nooks and cool brook-sides; but when home is reached, and the dust brushed off, we then recall the pleasantness we overlooked at the time. And so it is with many an effort to do good: we feel the toil and the fatigue, and the dust of discontent settles on our visit to the cottage, or the hour of teaching in the hot schoolroom. It may be years ere that dust is brushed away, and we see that even then "our labour was not in vain in the Lord."

It may refresh some patient Sunday-school teacher, who seems ever sowing and never reaping, here to recall the springing up of long hidden seed in a Sunday-school girl.

May the Lord Jesus bless this outline of the life and death of Susan Harris.

Let us look back some years ago, into the school-

room of St. Nicholas, Worcester. It is Sunday afternoon, the sun is shining with July brightness, and though the room is spacious and airy, yet the little groups of learners seem restless from the sultry heat. It is a pleasant room, and the floor as clean and white as any man-of-war deck. This floor is certainly the idol of cleanliness with its good day-mistress, and both teachers and children have to learn and practise one well-taught lesson, "Scrape your shoes."

We will stand awhile by the first class of girls. They are very neatly dressed, and the school rule of "no flowers, no feathers, no finery," is well observed by both teacher and scholars. The expression of their countenances is very different. Mary so quiet, Ann an open English face, Matilda looks cold and proud, Anne-Maria thoughtless. The eldest is upwards of twenty, and seems an example of thoughtful attention. (Elizabeth remained in this class till her twenty-fifth birthday. She left a farewell gift of a neat box to keep the contributions of her class to the Church Missionary Society. A half-sovereign was added from her wages.) Among others we notice a pale-faced girl, with very plain and almost unpleasant expression. But her answers show that she thinks, and the Reference Bible in her hand is a reward for good conduct. This is Susan Harris.

The teacher's eye glances round on her class, and she thinks, "How can I know my girls? how difficult to trace their hidden characters, save from the slight indications of their attention and answers."

She longs to know in whom the seed of the Word may have taken root, or may be springing up; but all is hidden from her, so she remembers her father's word of encouragement at the last teachers' meeting, "The work is yours, success is God's."

Now we will listen to their careful well-trained reading, which even the good bishop, on their annual examination day, pronounced "excellent, first-rate." The fortieth chapter of Isaiah is the chosen portion. The teacher has taken much pains in the week in examining the passage and preparing her lesson. But somehow she fails to interest them; the class is restless, the teacher discouraged. The teacher pauses, that she may look up herself to the great Teacher—how that look refreshes her. The last verse is read—"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint." From this she draws their attention to the natural history of the eagle; the strength of its wing, its upward flight, dwelling among the rocks, its piercing eye, meeting even the sunbeams. She speaks of the wings of faith bearing the soul upward, ever rising to things above, soaring among the heights of the Rock of Ages, and ever finding there "a place of defence, even the munitions of rocks." And then how faith is like that eagle's eye—how half-closed and dim the young eaglet's eye is, and then its gradual and strengthening clearness. So is the dimness of our faith, when the Lord Jesus first bids the

spiritual eye "be opened." But as we gaze upon the Sun of Righteousness, the dimness clears away, and in "His light we see light." Thus, ever looking, ever rising, we shall at length pass into the land of light, where the wing of faith shall "rest in His love," and the eye shall "see the King in His beauty."

The lesson is over, and the teacher thinks "I have taught them nothing to-day; I have not even interested them; it is my fault, not theirs."

Wait, wait yourself, wearied teacher! trust more to the Spirit's teaching of your scholars; the dimness on their eyes may yet pass away, and the Sun of Righteousness arise on them with healing in His wings.

It is nearly four o'clock now. The school-room door opens, and their kind rector enters for his customary closing of the school. He goes round to every class, with a kindly word of refreshing to each teacher; and any refractory child is pointed out for admonition. The naughtiest spirit would melt under his gentle words and the hand so kindly laid on the shoulder. He rings the bell, the teachers mark their class-books, and the Bibles are cleared away. Again the bell rings, all rise, and his silvery voice gives out and leads the hymn. The text word of his address is often taken from those unequalled hymns of Watts, or from the morning's text, or the subject of the school lesson for the day. The antiphonal questioning of boys and girls is quite spirited, the girls are so delighted to outdo the boys, and

refreshed her in weary hours of suffering. Warmly did Susan love her gentle teacher, E. P. H. We give some of their conversations :—

Susan to her teacher, "I am so happy, I would rather be like this, than ever so well. Yesterday I was so ill and thought I was dying."

Teacher.—"And could you trust yourself in the hands of Jesus?"

Susan.—"Yes, quite so. He is such a Saviour, I could not be afraid. He is very precious to me, and I love to think of Him."

She then joined earnestly in what was said about sin, responding, "Oh yes, I think of my sins, there's no good dwelling in me."

Again Susan spoke of loving the Lord Jesus, and how her thoughts were raised to Him continually. "It seems as if I could think of nothing else; I look up to Him and feel He never will forsake me. The verse Miss H. last pointed out to me, 'Abide in me and I in you,' I have thought a great deal about."

Teacher.—"Are you not thankful, Susan, that the Lord Jesus has taught you thus to know and love Him?"

"Yes, I do thank Him, and I thank Him too for sending you to teach me; oh, I do thank you so Miss Ellen," and Susan grasped her hand.

The nurse told us that Susan was quite an example in the ward. There were many careless giddy ones, these she warned very kindly and would check *the noisy talking* which is so great an evil in most

wards. Often she would get them to sit round her bed and read aloud, till her little strength was spent. One of the patients said, "I wish we were more like Susan, she never joins in the foolish talking, I wish we all followed her, she is a good girl, and sets us an example." "By their fruits ye shall know them."

After many weeks in the infirmary, Susan went home, she was not at all better, nor was any hope given of her recovery.

Susan lived at the corner of Cherry Tree Walk. It seemed strange that the long row of town houses with a high brick wall right before them, should get such a country name, but in the narrow garden behind, there really were cherry trees, and perhaps their snowy blossoms christened the walk as they fell. Susan's parents were very poor, and her father had only lately become a changed, and a church-going man. It had pleased God to awake him by the preached word, and well did he love St. Nicholas' Church, where he first heard the message of peace. John was always in his little corner by the vestry door, and we often watched him going up the very last to the table of the Lord; the last there, perhaps not the last, when the Great Master seats his guests. John's words were very rough and simple, but so honest and warm. "I do love Mr. Havergal's sermons. I'll stick to him as long as I live." John always read and prayed with his wife and daughter before supper time. And when wife and daughter went to a better home and left John alone,

he would call in his neighbours, "just to make two or three for the Lord to meet." They did, however, sometimes complain that "John's prayers were rather long, and that he pounded the chapter too much." But John was very real, and once when a visitor went up to his room and he did not hear her step or knock, through the open door she saw him on his knees, saying a long grace before his basin of broth and crust of bread.

His wife's name was Bridget, she was very quiet and civil, but not at all a comfort-maker for her husband and child. The ashes, the dust, the litter, seemed always undisturbed, and poor Susan sadly needed the cleanliness and tidy nursing, which in the poorest cottage can make a sick-room comfortable. And yet her mother loved her, and would watch by her day and night.

For many months Susan laid wasting away, her cough and weakness daily increasing. She had many visitors, and my dear father's quick step often stopped at her door. She often told me that "his prayers were such a comfort to her." "It's like heaven when he's praying with me. He always comes to do my soul good, and somehow his voice always comforts me. And then he asks me what I can fancy, and off he goes quickly and brings me something back so nice and relishing in his pockets. Often has he brought me an ice on a hot day." Ah, those pockets could tell kind tales of what they almost daily carried, marmalade, *and patties*, and potted meat, and best grocery to

the sick and needy, and when choice flowers from O—— conservatory were sent to the rectory, he would always carry some away to sick-rooms.

Only One knew and counted all those "cups of cold water." At this time the loan of a water cushion from Miss N. was a great comfort to Susan. Not long before that same cushion had borne a gentle lady sufferer. Sweet Mary! the very smile of heaven had shone in her brilliant eye, and when the sleep of death spread over that sunny face, it lingered still in untold peacefulness. On that same cushion three young sufferers had found "beneath them the everlasting arms," and then passed away to lean for ever on Jesus Christ.

Susan told us that when she could not sleep at night she would light the candle and get her Bible, and that always refreshed her.

To her teacher, Miss E., Susan said, "I am proud of my Sunday-school, it's a blessed thing to go to one. I was at your school for eleven years, and do thank God for your teaching. I used to love to hear you, and try to ponder over it till the end of the week. You used to beg me to seek the Lord Jesus, and to pray for the Holy Spirit; and if you had not, perhaps I should have gone in wicked ways as many others did. It used to vex me if the girls did not attend at their class, I only wish I had attended better."

We will just glimpse at that other Sunday-school teacher, whom we left weary and discouraged that hot July afternoon. She is sitting by Susan's bed,

and the poor, thin fingers are in the teacher's hand. Between the fits of coughing, Susan says—

"I was so ill all last night, and could get no sleep, as I laid awake one of the lessons you taught me at the Sunday-school all came back freshly to my mind. Do you remember explaining to us the fortieth chapter of Isaiah one Sunday?"

"No, dear Susan, I have quite forgotten it."

Susan.—"But I have not forgotten it, it was a very hot Sunday six years ago, and you told us a good deal about the eagle. When I went home that afternoon I thought so much of the lesson, and I went and read the chapter to a sick friend, and it did so comfort her. Last night those verses came to my mind, and a great deal of what you taught us about the wings and eye of faith, and it did so cheer me through the long night."

The teacher thanked God, and took courage.

One of Susan's thoughts will be pleasant for us to remember when the Sunday morning's clean and best clothes are put on. She said, "I often think, when mother changes me, and puts my clean things on, that I shall not want to change my robe of righteousness. That will be always clean and white, never soiled; I shall never want to put that off."

Sometimes, when too exhausted to speak much, she would say, "Just read, it's food to my soul." Another time she whispered, "I am nothing—nothing. Christ is *my* all; yes, He is all and in

all. What should I do now without His promises? they comfort me."

Susan often spoke of a sister who died in consumption when she was about six years old. She taught her many hymns, and tried to tell her of the love of Jesus. Susan did not forget this, and often, as a very little child, wished to love God; and, in her prayers, "felt she was speaking to Him." But she always spoke of her Sunday-school teaching, as that which led her to the Lord Jesus.

To her most loved teacher, she said, "I do thank you very much, dear Miss Ellen, for all you've done for me. I often lie and think of what I might have been if I had had no school to go to. I might have gone astray, like many others, if God had not sent you to warn me Sunday after Sunday, and point out to us the narrow way. And what should I have done without all the Scripture I learnt there? When I lie awake at night it all comes back into my mind so sweet, and in the day, when I am too weak to hold my Bible, the verses come in my mind like food. I wish all my class would attend to it more, it's *after* they will want it."

Standing on the very edge of the world, to which so many cling, and for which so many live, Susan said of it, "This world! oh, it seems a very little thing to me now, just no more worth than this little room. I don't desire any more of it, the world is not worth living for. I would not give up

my happiness, my hope, for worlds. My home is in heaven, and the Lord Jesus is *all* I want here or there."

December 22.—Her mother told the visitor that Susan sang a hymn in the night.

Susan. "Yes, it was just as I woke the hymn came in my mind, 'I love my Jesus.' Always when I wake some text or hymn comes to my mind. I might have had trifling thoughts, but He sends me 'songs in the night.' And then I can't help singing, and it bears me up, and helps me to suffer the pain. I am very weak, dear teacher, but He holds me."

"Yes, Susan; and the hand that holds you is the pierced hand; it is the hand that will never loose yours; it is the hand from which none shall pluck you. As a poor old Scotch woman said, 'It's not my grip of Christ, but Christ's grip of me.'"

Her fellow-scholars often came to see Susan, bringing with them little kind presents. Many a lesson did they learn by that bedside, and very faithful was Susan's advice, especially to the careless ones. Referring to this, Susan said, "Mary and Ann were with me on Sunday, and they told me they had left the school. The Lord strengthened me to talk to them, and show them how wrong it was to give it up, and how much they could always be learning there. And I told them the comfort those Sunday lessons were to me *now*, and what I might have been without them."

Christmas-day came, and while Susan gladly

remembered the good tidings echoing from Bethlehem, she rejoiced yet more in the hope of soon joining with angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven, in singing, "Glory to God in the highest."

To her teacher.—"This is my last Christmas-day, and it is the happiest I ever spent."

"Why, dear Susan?"

"I could not help crying for joy to think my next Christmas would be in heaven; that will be joyful, I shall be with Christ then. Oh, I would not give up this hope for worlds!"

From this time, Susan found much joy, as well as peace in believing. She was walking by the streams of that river which "makes glad the city of God."

Another day, Susan told her teacher of her increasing joy. "I was so happy all yesterday, Miss Ellen, I could scarcely contain myself. I was thinking of His love, the love of God in Christ, to me. Then I thought of a sermon your Papa preached on 1 John iv. 16, 'And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us.' I have not forgotten it, though it was four years ago. The thoughts of God's love made me so happy, I wished the room was full of good Christians, that we might all be happy together, it seemed too much happiness to keep to myself."

Her mother said that Susan was suffering a great deal more now. Her answer was—

"Mother, dear, don't mind it so, I am quite will-

ing to suffer this, and a great deal more, if He sees fit to send it me."

Teacher.—"I am glad, dear Susan, you are willing to suffer, rather than impatiently to wish to go."

Susan. "I know it is all right and for a good purpose. He won't put on me more than I am able to bear."

Susan was too weak now to hold her Bible, but she would lay her thin hand on it, and ask all who came to read for her. The 8th chapter of the Romans and the 19th of St. John were her favourite passages. The good-bye whisper was often, "I am so happy—always happy now."

February 12.—A cold wintry day, with snow falling thickly. It was an effort for Susan's delicate teacher to brave the long walk through the storm, but she felt a strong impulse not to delay her visit. She found Susan very wearied and uncomfortable. Her teacher smoothed the tumbled pillows, and combed her tangled hair, and washed her face. This ministering refreshed poor Susan, who enjoyed being clean and neat, far more than her mother thought needful.

The teacher sat down by her now dying scholar, and as she wiped away the gathering death-drops on her face, she said—

"God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes, and it will be very soon now, dear Susan."

~~Now~~ "He will, He will. But my Saviour ~~and~~ no kind hand to do for Him what you have

been doing for me. No one to do anything for Him as I have. I have pure water and nice things to refresh me, the Lord Jesus had none,—only that vinegar on the sponge.”

Her teacher read to her, and they talked together of grace and glory. Long had she watched the fruits of grace springing up in her scholar's soul, and now the Holy Spirit had ripened them for glory. She lingered long by the bedside, it was not easy to loose the dying hand, that would never again hold hers so lovingly. But they parted, and Susan's last whisper, “Full of hope, dear teacher,” seemed to give her a glance of the bright door just opening for her scholar.

That evening, the time came for Susan to rise on more than eagle's wings, and with glad flight to “mount up,” even into His presence “with whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord.”

“Then came a brighter season nigh
When faith and hope shall cease,
When love shall soar with eagle eye
Above the splendours of the sky,
To view Him face to face.”

REV. J. EAST.

VIII.

FOUR VISITS TO MARY HART.

"AND so, my dear lady, you would like to know something about poor Mary Hart. There must be a great many leaves in God's book, for I suppose there is a leaf for every child in His family. If I wrote the leaf of my life, it would be very blotted, but I like to think He writes it for me, and His hand wipes out the blots, and so it will be a clean page.

"I was always brought up in the fear of God, but it was the fear that kept me looking at a hedge of thorns. I lived with my aged grandmother. When I was about ten years old, she said it was time to shut the world out, and so she took to live in one little room, and said that I, her little Pollie, should wait on her. I wondered how grandmother was going to shut the world out, and was afraid she would keep the shutters up. I did not know then that the world was shut up in our hearts. Grandmother took to saying very long prayers, and I had to kneel by her quite upright all the time. It did

not seem like coming close to a dear Father and telling Him just what I wanted, and just what I had done wrong, and then feeling glad He knew all; but I supposed grandmother wanted different things to what I, a little girl of ten years old did, and so the prayers did not seem long and hard to her. Afterwards, grandmother would open the large Bible on her round table, and I had to stand upright by her and read what the prayer-book put for every day. Then grandmother would shut her eyes such a long time; I supposed that was shutting the world out. I dared not stir, but oh, how naughty I felt. I longed that pussy would jump up on grandmother's knee, and that she might see how much happier pussy was playing about than I, her little Pollie, kneeling and standing so upright and so still.

"I cannot tell you all that happened to me, a great many leaves of my life won't open now. I am ninety-five years of age, and yet I am quite pure and hearty, and I am so happy, body, soul, and spirit. I have just had such a great blessing, my Lord has allowed me to sit at this little table, and He has given me sight to read two lovely chapters, the morning psalms, and a hymn. Oh, what a blessing! it's like meat and drink to me. The more I read, the more precious it is to me. I have no fear of Him now. I have got beyond the hedge of thorns, and am climbing the mountain to Zion's habitation, and He is guiding me. I can't kneel

upright now as I did with grandmother, but my heart leans on Him, step to step.

"It is one and twenty years since I came to this nice room. It is a fine place, my dear, these alms-houses. No more rent to think about, plenty of coals found, and even warm blankets. Then I can have a nice bit of meat every day; and it is all from my heavenly Father. But I wonder sometimes, that almshouses are not built while the rich men are alive. I think it would please our Father better, if we did not keep the money in our purse till death comes, and makes us throw both purse and money away.

"I think it was in this room that the fear went out of my heart, and His love came flowing in like a river. It is a river, my dear, that never dries, it is always overflowing love. It was just in studying the Scriptures that His love and His light came. Every day brought me further from the hedge and nearer His arm. Yes, I knew what conversion of spirit was then. But it is the last ten years, that I have been with Him soul and body. I can't keep from Jesus a bit. Sometimes I ask myself, 'Is it wrong to be going to Him so often, to to be calling so much on Him?' then that word comes, 'Call upon me; pour out your hearts before Him.'

"I am rather tired now, and if you will read me a chapter it will so rest me. But I want to tell you I am uncomfortable in not paying that penny a week to the missionaries; I had rather pay it, it is

not much I can give to my dear Lord. Will you ask Miss Fanny to take to call again for it; besides I like her step on my floor, and the sun seems in her face, and she's always welcome to poor Mary Hart."

February 7.—"Is that you, my dear Miss H.? Well I have not been without thinking of you. It is so light this morning, I have been reading the Psalms and the lessons. How good my blessed Lord is to let me read, it makes me so happy, it is my great treasure. I was thinking how John in the vision had a book given him to eat, and though it was bitter at first it was so sweet after. So I read till I get to the honey; yes, it is sweet as honey to my throat, so smooth, so healing to every wound. On Saturdays I send for Mr. F. to find me the right Psalms and chapters for Sundays, for fear I have turned a leaf too much. I always look at the Epistle and Gospel too, because I know your dear father often chooses his text from something read at church. And then *I* seem to get a text, and it lasts me all the week.

"It is such joy when my dear Mr. Havergal comes to me, his prayers seem to lighten every load off me. He is like an earthly angel to me; ah, he does minister to me and many another.

"I have been trying to do without my nap after dinner, that I may have more time to read my dear Bible. My Saviour always comes with His word. Sometimes I feel a little dark, then I return to Jesus and he enlightens and enlivens me. He is

with me, heart, soul, and body. It's glorious to feel this. Mine is a happy little home, for Jesus is with me, sleeping or waking. I go to bed at seven, but I don't go to sleep till after ten o'clock. That's my time for thinking of being with Jesus for ever. I seem to see it all, how I am laid in my shroud in my coffin, and then in the churchyard. Then I seem to see Jesus coming to take me to all my relations who are in glory, and I seem to see them led in green pastures and following the Lamb. Then I think how He will come down to the brink of the river for me too, and He will say, 'Poor Mary Hart, enter into the joy of thy Lord.' It won't be long perhaps—I seem to be in heaven every night, for the veil is not very dark between. Then I hear the church clock strike, and I up with my hands and think, 'One hour nearer my dear Saviour;' then He sends His dear sleep to my eyes. When I wake in the morning He is with me still. I am so happy, for my God is with me. I am just waiting for Him to call me. Sometimes I look at my windows, for the carriage wheels going by in the street make me think that *His* are long coming for me. And I say, 'Lord, pass not by this window, come in to poor Mary Hart, and take me away to sup with Thee in glory!' I often think I hear my Lord coming, even a rap at the door seems a token for me; when He does come, I shall like to open 'immediately.'

"I care less and less for the world, I find it is His love shuts it out of the heart. I used to like to sit

at the window and look down the street, but never now. The world is so little to me, it is all like dross, now I have got the gold. You don't think I am deceiving myself, and that I could feel this joy if it was not His drawing me closer to Himself. Night and day it's nothing else with me but Jesus ! it's all my cry, 'Come, Lord Jesus!'

"I think of Him as my all, He is in my all, and my all comes from Him. But though I am so joyful, I always come to Jesus as a sinner, ah, a lost sinner; I never let that slip. Sometimes Satan seems to rise against me, but I say, 'Get thee behind me, Satan,' and my Lord keeps him at a happy distance from me. I am happy, body, soul, and spirit, and soon I shall be for ever with my Lord."

December 23.—"Who is it standing by my bed? my eyes are so dim, but I know your voice now. Blessings on you for coming to see poor Mary. I am still in the body, giving trouble to those who wait on me, but I am doing the work God has given me to finish. You wonder what work poor old useless Mary can do; my work is to wait patiently for my Saviour's call; just to lie here, till He comes for me. I am getting weaker and weaker. I have to ask when is it Sunday, and when is it Monday. I used to know when my happy Sundays came, I don't now, but it does not matter; it is all Sundays to me now.

"I can't read now, but I like to put my hand on my Bible and feel it near. And my Jesus is with me, heart, soul, and body. He is my support, my

with me, heart, soul, and body. It's glory
 feel this. Mine is a happy little home, for
 with me, sleeping or waking. I go to bed
 but I don't go to sleep till after ten o'clock
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 I seem to see it all, how I am laid in m
 my coffin, and then in the churchyard
 seem to see Jesus coming to take me
 lations who are in glory, and I see
 led in green pastures and follow
 Then I think how He will come down
 of the river for me too, and He
 And my
 Mary Hart, enter into the joy
 won't be long perhaps—I seem to see sin, and evil,
 every night, for the veil is not the last rags, and
 Then I hear the church clock strike on you. Ah,
 my hands and think, 'One
 Saviour;' then He sends His

When I wake in the morning, a long sleep. Have
 I am so happy, for my God and poor Mary not
 waiting for Him to call me, in the Lord's leisure. I
 my windows, for the carriage lets me be happy.
 the street make me think I can see; Himself, and no
 for me. And I say, 'Lord, my pleasure, wait my
 come in to poor Mary. I will call for thee.'
 sup with Thee in glory. I am wrong in pressing to
 Lord coming, even as I say, 'Why tarriest
 for me; when He does not know what
 'immediately.'

"I care less, and I have that down in His
 love shall be that she does not

How I knowest that

He
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How I shall
pass over: and then
of God come down
holy ones following
they will come with Him
and they will all know
me, and will say, 'Come,

and Jesus will come to my side
through the waters with me;
be glory, glory, for poor Mary

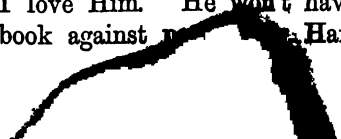
firm arm, that never gives way. I am so can only thank and thank Him.

"Will you read to me now? my ear is if I only get a word, I say, Ay, ay, th and it has been mine for years. I always choose me the sweetest texts, at mine and yours too.

"I like to feel your hand; let me h you pray by me.

"Good-bye, and may God bless you. meet again here, the day will come v come down the hill of Zion to meet yo Lord Jesus will be bringing you safe waters, safe from all the strife, and and He will soon strip off you the I shall see Him put the white robe my dear, the Lord Jesus can do all will come, and 'He will do it.'"

December 27.—"I have had a lon you sat by me long? You find gone yet; learning to wait the Lo am happier every day, for He lets But it is His face I want to see; veil! He says to me, 'Wait my leisure, and at my holy time I w Sometimes I reflect if I do wro go; perhaps I should not say Thou.' I, a poor, weak worm, is right. But He knows all th I love Him. He won't have a book against me. Hart



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IX.

EARLY FRUIT FROM AN IRISH SCHOOL.

How pleasant to watch a fruit-tree in the spring, covered with snowy blossoms. Some of the blossoms drop off and die away, but from others a tiny fruit springs. At first it is small, and green, and sour, but it is firmly in the branch. The life sap from the root flows even into that tiny fruit, and so it grows larger and larger. Many storms may shake the branch, and keen winds blow on it, but the fruit falls not; day after day the sun shines on it, till it becomes ripe and pleasant fruit—then the Master gathers it.

But many a child seems more like the blossom that falls, like the fruitless branch that withers away. There may be many blossoms in the Church that never yield living fruit in the Lord Jesus Christ. Unless the life sap of the Holy Spirit flows from the Lord Jesus into the heart, there will never be living branches, or ripened fruit.

The following is an account of three girls, who

were indeed living branches, and so bore pleasant fruit.

They were brought up in one of the institutions, well known in Ireland as the Charter Schools. These schools are protected by Royal Charter, and give Protestant instruction and maintenance to many children, training them for service.

We must look back a few years, not into a schoolroom, but into a comfortable room at Celbridge Lodge. Lying on a bed, and looking very ill, is one of these—Mary M’Nally.

The kind friend who, for many years, taught at the school every Sunday evening, has given the orphan girl a home to die in. Sitting by her side is a delicate-looking girl Lucy Delamere. Mary has sent for her to speak to her schoolfellow about the Lord Jesus, knowing how precarious her health was. Another Charter School girl is standing by Eliza Lifford. She is there to wait upon Mary. Mary chose her because she could sing so well. Many were the hymns sung in that sick-room. Opposite Mary’s bed a large printed text hangs, “My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest;” and Mary could tell how near and bright that presence shone, how sweet to her that rest. Each of these three girls became ripened fruit. Of Mary M’Nally, her kind friend supplies the following remembrances.

“After Mary left the C—— school, she went into a situation in Dublin. Here the preaching of the Rev. M. Day was much blessed to her, and she

happy Mary, how I would like to feel like you!" Her answer was, "My Saviour will be your Saviour if you come to Him, He will not cast you out. But don't put it off—by His grace He led me early in life to seek Him. Remember, it is free grace that saves us; it is the freeness which makes the fullness." And then Mary put out her hands, as if she would show how He would encircle all who came to Him.

Mary's knowledge of Scripture was great, and whatever portion was begun to be repeated to her, she could always finish it. Even in her sleep she would repeat texts. She enjoyed singing, and among her favourite hymns were, "Jesus, lover of my soul," and "There is a fountain."

One morning she seemed very low. Mrs. H. said,

"You have had a bad night."

Mary. "Yes, I had a dark night, but Jesus is beyond the cloud."

Another day, Mrs. S. heard her coughing a good deal, and going to her, said,

"I am sorry to see you suffering so much."

She replied, "It is nothing, it is nothing; I have long intervals of rest. Jesus is very merciful to me. He had suffering, but I have mercy."

The last night came; she took hold of both Mrs. H.'s hands, saying, "This is the night that I am going to Jesus, lift up your heart for me." Almost her last words were, after taking a little water, "I shall soon be drinking of the water of life." She sank back—the

ripened fruit was gathered, and Mary was safe in His garner above.

A fortnight before her death, she was arranging some little gifts of her books, when she told Mrs. H. she had six pounds in the savings' bank, which she wished given to the Charter School, as a testimony of the benefit she had received there. Premiums were given from this grateful bequest.

Of Lucy Delamere there is not much to tell. She was a very quiet girl. Mary often sent for her. She knew how sickly she was, and tried to lead her to know the Lord Jesus. Lucy was not ill long. She was nursed in the infirmary at the school. On Sunday evenings, after the class, Mr. S. visited her. Lucy never said a word, but she always listened attentively, and thanked him. Mr. S. particularly spoke to her of the necessity of reading the Scripture, with prayer for the Holy Spirit's teaching, and for self-application, not taking the promises generally, but for herself. As when reading the 53d of Isaiah, to say, "He was wounded for *my* transgressions, He was bruised for *my* iniquities."

After many visits, one Sunday evening, Mr. S. saw Lucy's countenance was so changed. It was beaming with joy. She exclaimed, "I am a brand plucked from the burning." Now I can say, "He was wounded for *my* transgressions, He was bruised for *my* iniquities."

Thus the Holy Spirit had taught Lucy the wonderful difference between *our* Saviour and *my*

Saviour. Like Mary, Thomas, and St. Paul, she could now say, "My spirit hath rejoiced in God *my* Saviour; *my* Lord and *my* God, Who loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*."

Another promise of the Lord Jesus Lucy found quite true, "Your joy no man taketh from you." All who saw her noticed the glad look on her face. An old friend of the Institution went up to see her. He said, "Well, I have seen a sight to-day that well repays me for all the care and trouble I have given to the school. I went up into the infirmary, and there saw a happy, dying child, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God."

Other young visitors well remember her joyful look, and how she thanked them for the flowers they brought her.

The woman who nursed her remembered her with the greatest affection. She said of her—

"Lucy was a darlint to nurse. She was so even-tempered and gentle, just like a lamb, the crathur. An' she had such a thought for me, body and soul. Often she asked Miss B. to let me take a can of milk home for the childer. My poor jewel, it's one thing my eye never missed from her little table, an' that was her Bible, that never wanted the dust wiped off it. My darlint child knew I couldn't read, and that I wanted the good of the chapters as much as herself; and often she'd be saying so sweet and lovin'-like, 'Nurse, dear, let me read for you while I can.' You may think, my lady, I *don't* forget her. See, here's the keepsake

she gave me, it's never left my pocket these long years. This was my lamb's little needlebook and thread case; it was lovely and clane when she gave it to me, but I liked the feel of it along with me always. These were her needles, and there's the ribbon, just as her bit of a hand left it. Oh, my dear child, how joyful she died. She is moulderin' now; but if any one's soul is along with Christ, I'm sure it's Lucy honey's. I only wish I could die as *sure* as my sweet colleen did."

(The poor Nurse did die joyfully. She learnt to know and love Him, whom she called "My darlint Saviour, that spilt His heart's blood for me.")

Lucy did not linger long. Her joy was never taken from her. The young fruit was early ripened, and quickly gathered into that presence, where is "fulness of joy."

When Lucy was carried to the churchyard, her schoolfellows followed, and as they walked they sang, "When I can read my title clear," and other hymns, Eliza Lifford leading them.

When they came away from the graves of Mary and Lucy, they could not sing for tears. One verse might well be written there—

" When from the dust of death I rise,
To claim my mansion in the skies ;
E'en then shall this be all my plea,
Jesus hath lived, hath died for *me*."

Some time after the death of Lucy, Eliza Lifford left the Charter School. She did not remain long

in her situation. Then she tried to teach a little school, but that did not answer. She went to England, and nothing was heard of her for a long time. Illness came, and, being an orphan, there was no place but an hospital, and then the union, to be taken to. Now she grieved that she had not remained longer in her situations, and laid by a little. She wrote to her kind friends at the Lodge, and repeatedly had assistance.

The following letter was received by Mr. S. from a clerical visitor at the Union.

“When visiting the poorhouse hospital yesterday I promised one of the patients, Eliza Lifford, to let you know that she is drawing near the end of her earthly journey. She has a great desire to hear from you before she departs, or if you could see her.

“She is, and has been for a long and weary season, a great sufferer; but she is an example of faith and patience. My brother curate and myself have been deeply impressed with this, and are satisfied she is drawing supplies from the one only source of grace and strength,” &c., &c. S. M. M.

In answer to this, a visitor went to find her out. It was not very easy to gain admittance, but at last the doors were all unlocked, and long stone steps led to the women’s ward. What a bare, dreary looking place! rows of narrow beds and rows of pale miserable looking faces; sorrow and suffering seemed reigning there. The windows were high, nothing could they see, but the cold white walls. But they

could not shut the sunshine out! that welcome visitor defies all bars.

The nurse pointed to one of the beds, saying, "That is Eliza Lifford." How changed, how emaciated, and yet a smile! She knew the visitor and burst into tears. It soothed her to be told that Mr. and Mrs. S. would soon come and see her. Then she poured out her lonely heart, that for four years had sorrowed on within those desolate walls.

"And shall I really see them again? Oh, then, the Lord has heard my prayers! I did not like to let them know where I was, but I did so long to hear their voice again. Mr. S. was a father to me, the fatherless; when I had no shelter he gave me one. It was there I waited on Mary M'Nally from our school. That time was like a little heaven below. It was hearing Mr. S. read chapters to Mary, and seeing her joy, that first made me think there was real comfort in religion. How I remember his reading the 12th of Hebrews, but I did not mind any of the promises then; now they are all so lovely to me. And then, a long time after that, when I was getting training lessons at the infant school, how kindly they supported me. Those were happy days, but my greatest treat was coming up to Miss F. H's little singing class in the drawing-room. That was music. We used to sing 'Jerusalem, my happy home,' and that's where I am fast going now. The doctors tell me, I am going as fast as I can, and I would not wish to be better or get well for all the world.

"I have found Him, I am in Christ. It is not long ago that I found Him—perhaps two or three years; it was not till He laid me low on a bed of pain. It was *in* His chastening that I found Him. 'Before I was afflicted I went astray.' I was wild and neglectful, I did not mind those lovely readings at the Charter School on Sunday evenings; since then I have longed to sit there again. Often I wished my school time was over, and fancied that I was too old to learn; oh, how foolish I was! And worse than that, I did not care to love and serve my Saviour. But,

" 'Jesus sought me, when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God.'

"The Lord Jesus found me. I am washed and sanctified. I am going to Him; going to eternity, that *great rest*. I have not a fear, not a doubt.

"How kind of Mrs. S. to send me this nosegay of flowers, it's seldom flowers come into a ward. Lovely flowers! where I am going they don't want these.

" 'There everlasting spring abides
And never-fading flowers.' "

And then her visitor begged she would tell her how she was, for not one word had she said about her evident sufferings, with her right arm quite useless and bound up in poultices.

Eliza.—"It is just like sores all over me; I think I am like Lazarus. There is not a bit of skin left on my back, and the hip bone is quite through.

The knuckles of my hand are all raw too. I am a burden to myself and the poor woman that waits on me, for I cannot even turn. But it is all because He loves me, He is searching me in the furnace of affliction.

"It is four years since I came here, I think; but I hardly know how the time goes. All my books are gone but my dear Bible, the one Mr. S. gave me, that's on the shelf over my head. I can seldom turn a leaf to read, but the Holy Spirit brings many promises to my mind. How I wish I could just see Mr. and Mrs. S., and give them my blessing before I die. I do pray for them."

A month passed away, and again the visitor stood by Eliza, who said, "How good the Lord is to answer my prayers and send friends to see me. You are going over the Irish Sea, but I am going over the river of Jordan."

"And are you still suffering, Eliza?"

"Just the same; my sufferings are great, but then He is showing me miracles of His love. Oh, such love the Lord Jesus shows me! Is it not a miracle, filling me with His presence, so that there seems hardly room for an earthly friend to stand beside me? The ward looks desolate, but I am not; He comes so near me.

"I have seen dear Mr. S. since you were here. I tried to tell him of my neglect at the Charter School."

"Do you mean your neglect in learning the Scriptures, or your lessons, Eliza?"

"Oh, no! not neglect in head-learning. I got plenty of *head-premiums*, but it was heart neglect. I neglected His great salvation. It was not till I was laid on this hard bed of suffering, that I learnt God's Word in my heart. He put me in His school. But oh, I have learnt so little, and my mind seems so weak, I can't remember; often I can't even call a verse to mind. I was grieving over this to Mr. Shaw. He took my Bible and pointed out to me the promise in John xiv. 26: 'But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.'

"Since then, when I want a text, I ask the Holy Spirit to bring it to my mind, and He does. I never get any sleep but by the Word."

"What do you mean, Eliza?"

"You see, dear lady, sleep does not come natural to me, I am in such pain, and so restless, and so sore with my bores through the skin, I don't know how to lie. Then I ask the Holy Spirit to bring some verse to me, and He does, and then I put my hand under my poor back, and the verse composes me, and so I go to sleep on the Word. Last night my verse was Ps. lxxxiv. 11, 'The Lord God is a sun and shield, the Lord will give grace and glory.' But I do so want teaching, I long for some one to come and teach me. There is some verse with

'needs be' in it. I have been trying to find it all the morning."

"It is in 1 Peter i. 6, Eliza. 'Though now for a season, if needs be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.'"

Eliza.—"What does heaviness mean?"

"It means sorrow, being cast down, weighed down; a little child is called light-hearted, because it knows nothing of care or sorrow."

Eliza.—"Oh, I am just that. I am light-hearted; it's not heaviness, for my sins and sorrows are cast on Him. I never was so happy as I am now. I am hid in Christ; yes, I am in Christ."

Truly the fruit of the Spirit is "joy," "joy and peace in believing." It was a bright contrast to that dark foreground, the workhouse pallet, the hard bolster, the breakfast of dry bread and cold milk, the bare whitewashed walls, that unvarying horizon, the same pain, the same sores, the same unwilling attendance, the grudgingly given help, and yet amid all, a smile of joy, a hope which cast its anchor within the veil.

While the visitor was sitting by Eliza, two ladies came into the ward. Eliza said one of them was a new friend.

"For all the time I laid here only one lady ever came to see me, and she could not stay to read. It was reading and teaching I longed for, and so, because of my importunity, she asked this kind young lady to come and see me. Was it not an answer to prayer?"

Her friend came and sat down with them, and taking out her little Bible, said, "I will read you part of my morning chapter, Eliza, Exod. xvii. 5-7." And then there was searching into the hidden meaning of that smitten rock, that gushing water. "That rock was Christ." "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." And when wilderness wanderings and wilderness thirstings are over, "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and lead them unto living fountains of water."

After her friend was gone, Eliza spoke of the great attention and comfort she received from the ministrations of the chaplain, and another clergyman who came for him, Rev. S. M. M., and then Eliza asked her visitor to reach the hymn-book Mr. S. had lately brought her.

"Oh, how glad I was to get our hymn-book again, the same we sang from at the Charter School, the same I sang with Mary M'Nally and Lucy. Happy Sundays, happy class times, happy hymns; but it's all a shadow of what is coming!"

"I led the singing for years, but I *never* sang till now, that I cannot sing a note!"

A little while before the last shadows fled away, Eliza dictated this note to her kind friends at C. Lodge:

"I wish to return you my sincere and dying thanks and blessing for your kindness to me. I am most happy in my mind, and willing to depart this

life when it will please the Lord to call me. I am still a great sufferer, but, thanks be to God, I believe my glass is nearly run. I had a letter from Miss H. about a month ago, which cheered my heart. The poor women in this ward do not forget to pray for her. I so enjoyed the tea you sent me, and it cheered their weak hearts too. I should be glad to know how my poor fellow-sufferer M. F. is, but I could not expect you to sit down and write to me. I do not forget Mr. S.'s last words to me. The Rev. Mr. M. is most kind and attentive to me, and gives me your kind assistance and messages. Kindest of friends, if possible, once more I would wish to see you. Wishing you all blessings, and many happy years, is the sincere prayer of your afflicted and humble servant, ELIZA LIFFORD."

A little while and one poor workhouse bed was empty, and one more came "to the spirits of just men made perfect."

And beneath the names of Mary, Lucy, and Eliza, may it not be written, "These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb."

X.

THE SISTER OF "A WISE AND HOLY CHILD."

(Written for Children).

SOME years ago a memoir was published of "A Wise and Holy Child, or a short account of Elizabeth Edwards."* The children who read that book may like to hear about her sister Emma, and how she too obeyed the Saviour's call. Both dear sisters are now in glory, among the "spirits of the just made perfect." It would be a sweet and wonderful story if they could tell us about their home of joy and love, and we should like to listen to even the echo of the glad songs they hear, but now we can only look at the steps by which they reached it. They were young when the Lord Jesus called them to enter the narrow way which leadeth unto life. And the very same call comes to every child that has a Bible or a Bible teacher. You may think, "It is only my teacher who tells me to come to Jesus," but it is the Lord Jesus himself who still speaks to you in His word, and says, "Strive to

* Memoir of Elizabeth Edwards, by Rev. W. H. Havergal, M.A.

enter in at the strait gate. If you do not strive at once, every day will take you farther down the broad way that leads to destruction. Soon your heart will grow so deaf and hard, you will not hear the call of the Lord Jesus, or even wish to find that blessed way. Then, when it is too late, you will find you have missed the only safe road, and, though you may see the outside of the gate of the shining city, alas! it will be shut against you, and you will never enter in.

But it is not too late yet, and it may help you to begin that journey by hearing how the sister of the "Wise and Holy Child" did strive to enter in the strait gate, and how she found that wisdom's ways are pleasant, and all her paths are peace.

It is not very easy to talk to one's own pen and paper, so I will just make friends with the children who may read this, and think that I am talking to them about Emma Edwards. She was younger than Lizzie, a pretty child, with rosy face and dark blue eyes. If you had seen either of the two sweet sisters, you would have wished to know them. Emma's parents were not poor, and she had no hard work to do, though she was very useful in helping her mother in the shop.

Perhaps some of you do not like helping your mothers at all. Poor children are often very unwilling to get up in the morning when they are first called. They do not like learning to wash, and iron, and clean; they do not like learning to darn their father's stockings, or patch the little one's clothes.

And ladies' children too are often quite cross if mamma asks them to do anything to help her; how seldom they *like* doing what she tells them, how seldom they say, "Can I help you, dear mamma?" Can we find a text in the Bible about doing what we don't like? Yes, here is one, "Children, obey your parents in all things" (Col. iii. 20.) "*All* things" must mean even those that you may not like doing at all. And of the children's great example it is said, "Even Christ pleased not Himself."

Emma's health was not very strong; she went to a good school, but the doctor said she must not learn many lessons. She also attended St. Nicholas' Sunday School. Her teacher loved her very much; she spoke of her as thoughtful and attentive, and her answers seemed to prove it. Still Emma did not care very much about religion, and her mother said, that though she was a dear good child to her, she wished she could see Emma caring more for her Bible and less about dress.

Emma deeply felt the death of her dear sister Lizzie, but four or five years had passed since then, and Emma was now nearly sixteen. Now, can you fancy yourself going with me to see Emma? for she is very ill. For many long weeks she has been suffering from some disease in the hip joint, which makes it agony to move. We shall find her home at the corner of a busy street, on the way to the station. We will pass through the shop, and now we are in the same room where I saw Lizzie die in her mother's arms. How very, very sad

Emma looks as she lies on the sofa. Pain is not the secret of her sadness,—it is the thought of unforgiven sin and fear of death. For some time past poor Emma has been sorrowfully finding out, day by day, what a sinful heart she has. The doctor has told her mother she never can get well; Emma heard this, and her look of anguish was terrible indeed as she said, “I shall never, never go to heaven.” Listen, now, as she says, “Oh, Miss H., what shall I do? I am so wicked, so sinful; I am not ready to die; indeed, I fear I shall go to hell.”

“Have you always felt so sinful, dear Emma?”

“Oh no, dear Miss H., for years I have never thought or really cared about it, but it is some weeks now that I have seen myself so sinful.”

“And left to yourself, dear Emma, you never would have cared about it, but have slept on in sin and danger. Now, I do trust that it is God the Holy Spirit who is convincing you of your sin, and teaching you that your ‘heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.’”

Emma.—“I find it is worse to bear sin than all my pain; often I lie awake in the night, crying and vexing about it.”

“It is this burden of sin that the Lord Jesus bears away. Look back at Calvary, and ‘behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.’ It is *done*, dear child, ‘the Lord *hath* laid on Him the iniquity of us all.’ You are looking at your sin instead of looking at Him ‘who was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.’

It is such a blessed exchange, Emma, *your* sin was given to Jesus, and He will give you *His* righteousness. Then, in that righteousness, you are all fair and clean. Take your Bible, dear child, and let us find some of his own words. We will read 2 Cor. v. 15-21. What comfort in the 18th verse, ‘Who *hath* reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ.’”

Many such visits were paid to Emma, and still she spoke of sin as a heavy burden. Long ago the Lord Jesus had invited all who were weary and heavy laden to come to Him. There is no load so heavy as unforgiven sin. If we have not faith to see it cast into the depths of Christ’s blood, it will, and must, cast us into the bottomless depths of fire everlasting. Poor Emma! she had not yet come to the Lord Jesus; but He saw her crying about her naughty heart, and, though she seemed to get no farther towards Him, He came nearer and nearer to her. And the very same promise that made so many glad in Judea and Galilee long ago, was soon to comfort Emma too.

My dear father often called to see Emma. Her mother said she would watch for his quick step, and longed for the time of his visits to come. Emma, especially, prized his Sunday evening visits on his way home from preaching at St. Nicholas. Once, when he was sent for after church to another invalid, she would not go to bed, but lay watching for him till after ten o’clock, knowing he never forgot to come.

For a long time Emma was “asking, and seeking,

and knocking." We do not always know exactly when we first find the Lord Jesus; we do not always see the gate of mercy opened. But Emma did; and it pleased the Lord Jesus to comfort her all at once. Just as He quickly said to the woman, who stood at His feet behind Him, weeping, "Thy sins are forgiven."

One Sunday in August Emma was in greater distress than ever. During the whole day she was in agony of mind. She told her mother it really seemed "as if Satan were trying to get hold of her, that she was going to hell, and that her sins deserved it." Her mother sent to tell my dear father of her distress. It was evening, the church bells were chiming, and the sweet sound was heard in the room of that weeping child. But in the courts above there was sweeter music still, even the joy of angels over one lost lamb found by the Shepherd. The Lord Jesus was even then drawing near to take poor Emma in His Shepherd-arm, and on His bosom to wipe away those sad tears, and turn her mourning into joy.

There were footsteps on Emma's staircase, the feet of one that brought "good tidings of peace." Her kind pastor stood by her, and was told her dark distress. With his gentle voice he repeated the words of Jesus, "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Then he knelt and prayed a long time, that she might *then* by faith "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," that

she might *then* see the burden of her sin was laid on Him who was made sin for us. It was the prayer of faith, and, "while they were yet speaking," God heard and answered it. The Holy Spirit opened Emma's eye to look at Jesus, "wounded for her transgressions, bruised for her iniquities." And so the fearful weight was gone. She saw her sin laid upon Jesus, and believing, she rejoiced. Her kind pastor left her rejoicing in God her Saviour.

All this passed before church time. After the service we met her sister Leah, who said, "Do come and see Emma; she has been talking to us so sweetly, ever since Mr. H. left her. I never saw her so happy before, for she has been in such trouble of mind, quite despairing of ever going to heaven."

We found dear Emma altered indeed. A smile of peace was there; the sad look gone, and her eyes shone with a new gladness. As I leant to kiss her, she said—

"Oh, dear Miss H., I want to tell you all. You know how long I have felt such a sinner, and no hope that I should go to heaven. Now I do believe He has washed me from all my sins in His own blood. You often said those words to me, 'Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.' Now, I believe them. Yes, Jesus has helped me to come to Him; oh, it is so sweet to find Him."

"My sister E. is waiting below. Shall she come up stairs, Emma; she would like to see you?"

Emma.—"Oh, yes. I can speak to everybody now, and tell them I have found Jesus."

In replying to my sister, Emma said—

"Satan has been tempting me so, and to-day worse than ever, like the roaring lion ready to devour me. Oh, it is such agony when you feel as I have done, sinking into hell to be lost for ever. But while your dear Papa was praying with me all these fears went away; it seemed as if the Holy Spirit helped me to look at the Lord Jesus, and for the first time I saw that He died for my sins, and that His precious blood washed them all away."

"Do you wish to get better now, Emma?"

"Oh, no; I would not stay for all the world when the Lord Jesus comes for me. It will be all over then; all my sin and crying and pain gone—rest with Jesus for ever."

Her sister and friends were in the room, for she had been so ill and exhausted, she was thought dying.

Emma turned to them, saying, "Dear sisters, I want you to seek the Lord Jesus while you are in health. It will be a hard bed when you come to die, if you have not found Jesus."

We said good night to Emma, and promised to come again.

Emma.—"But perhaps I shall be seeing the Lord Jesus before then. I do hope He will come for me to-night."

But she was yet to wait for His coming "a little

while," and show forth the praises of Him who had "called her out of darkness into His marvellous light." We will now try and tell you how Emma followed the Lord Jesus, through much pain and suffering, in patience, humility, and love. In patience. Only think what it must be to lie still for ten long months. It is not so bad to lie in bed if you can move about in it; but poor Emma had to bear sharp pain, and yet never move at all. No one knew till after her death how much she suffered, and how full she was of inward disease and sore wounds. She got very thin, so that the bones came through her skin, and yet she never fretted, but was patient still. Then she had leeches and blisters and medicine, and the noisy street made her head ache. Nor could she amuse herself with books or work, it seemed as if she could do nothing but bear the pain. Sometimes, when a little easier, Emma would thankfully say, "Oh, mother, thank God for this ease; what a mercy to be without pain for five minutes." Often her patient moan made her mother sad.

Dear children, how seldom you thank God for being well. For weeks and months and even years you do not know what five minutes pain is, and yet you do not really thank Him. And when in church we thank God for "our preservation, and all the blessings of this life," you are sleepy or talking, or letting your thoughts wander, and so you do not thank Him. Then when pain does come, how fretful and impatient you feel. And

Emma could not have been so uncomplaining, had not God the Holy Spirit taught her to be "patient in tribulations."

Emma also followed the Lord Jesus in humility. She remembered many of her past faults, and spoke very humbly of them. When the church bells chimed she would say, "Oh, mother! how very differently I should go to church now if I could. How differently I should try and pray there now, instead of thinking, as I used to, about other things, and how I should listen if I could only hear one more sermon!"

Emma had been fond of dress. She said that before she was ill, her clergyman met her and said, "Emma, don't love your bonnet and new dress too much, think more about the robe of righteousness your soul wants." Emma said, "I felt vexed with Mr. H. for saying this to me then, but now, these poor soiled sheets are more beautiful to me to lie in and know that Jesus loves me, than to wear the finest clothes I ever had."

Dear children, are you a little fond of smart dress, instead of choosing that which is neat and good, and according to that station of life in which it has pleased God to call you? The Lord Jesus said, "Take no thought, what you shall put on;" that is, no anxious thought—no trying to be finer than you can afford. Does that girl take "no thought," who teazes her mother to buy gay flowers for her bonnet, feathers for her hat, or some smart frock, that will not wash and wear? Would you like it to be

thought of you, what I heard an old woman say to a girl, who had got scarlet flowers for the first time, "Why, child, you look as if your head was all a-fire!" In the Sunday school that Emma attended, both lady teachers and children observed the rule, "No feathers or flowers allowed." Let all children (and teachers too) choose for their pattern the lily of the valley, that neat hiding flower, that bends away from our gaze beneath its green leaves.

"Pretty lilies seem to be
Emblems of humility."

Another fruit of the Spirit which now ripened in Emma was love—love to God and love to those around her. Shall we listen to what she said one day to her mother as she kissed her? "Dear, dear mother, you have been a good mother to me, and I love you dearly, but now there is One I love better than all the world besides; yes, better than even you, dear mother!"

"Yes, my dear child, is it not Jesus you love best?"

Emma.—"Yes, it is Jesus, He is dearer to me than all the world besides."

When asked if she were happy, Emma said, "Yes, but I want to be happier still, for I want to love Jesus more and more."

She very much liked a hymn written by a clergyman, the Rev. Abdool-Messeeh. He had been a Mohammedan, and was converted to Christianity through the Rev. H. Martyn at Cawnpore. He *sang* it just before he died.

"Beloved Saviour, let not me
In Thy kind heart forgotten be.
Of all that decks the field or bower,
Thou art the fairest, sweetest flower.

"Youth's morn has fled, old age comes on,
But sin distracts my soul alone ;
Beloved Saviour, let not me
In Thy kind heart forgotten be."

And now, Emma loved the people of God. She asked her mother not to let many friends come to see her, for she would rather talk to those who knew Christ.

Emma often said how much she loved her kind clergyman, Mr. Havergal and valued his visits. Once, while she seemed insensible, he stood by her for some time, and at length gently said, "Do you know me, Emma?" She opened her eyes and said, "Oh, yes! I shall always know *you*." She would fix her eyes on him and drink in all his words, often saying to her mother, when he was gone, "There is no one like Mr. H. I do love him so, and he always knows how to comfort me and what to pray for."

Her love for her mother was very great. Often in her pain, her cry would be, "My dear, dear, good mother, I love you so dearly!" Emma always seemed sorry to give her mother trouble in waiting on her, and would often beg her to lie down and take some rest. To her sisters, she was very affectionate and gentle, thanking them for all they did for her.

She also tried to show her love by thinking of

and praying for missionaries toiling for God in distant lands. She had a missionary box, and would ask for it to be brought to her bedside, that she might slip some pence in, saying, "O mother, how often I forgot my missionary box when I was well; will God accept this from me now? I was a naughty girl to forget the poor heathen. Mother, you will keep my box, let it stand on the shelf when I am gone, and put a good many pennies in."

It was pleasant, also, to see Emma's thankfulness. When she felt a little better, she would say, "Thank God, thank God." When very thirsty, she would not drink till she had said, "Thank God for giving me this." Flowers always pleased her. I remember seeing her take out all the white flowers from a fresh nosegay, saying, "How white, how white! But I shall be whiter still some day, and never fade away like these flowers, when I have put on the robe washed white in the blood of the Lamb." This reminds me of some verses written by my father about flowers.

"Children, while you gather flowers,
Think how fleeting are your hours;
Think again, in Eden's bowers,
You may cull unfading flowers.

"Jesus is the sweetest flower;
Give to Him each passing hour;
He will then, in heavenly bower,
Make you each His fadeless flower."

W. H. H.

Some weeks had passed away since that happy *Sunday* in August. Emma's fear and sadness had

never once come back. She was now "looking unto Jesus." Looking at what He had done for her on Calvary, and looking at what He was doing for her at God's right hand. And those who look at the Lord Jesus will meet His eye looking down on them. She knew that He looked with pity on her pain. Looking, that He might guide her with His eye, and guard her from the Evil One. Looking on her with the light of His countenance, with the smile of His love. One evening, my father returned from visiting her, and said, "I have been seeing Emma Edwards. My visits there are always pleasant. Dear child, it seems with her that 'at evening time it shall be light.' In her little heart there seems waking up such peace and joy, like this beautiful sunset. Just now she has been saying to me, 'The Lord is very gracious to me.' Last night I was in much dreadful pain, but Jesus seemed to whisper to me, Peace, peace, I am with thee.' She is suffering much with distressing oppression on her breath, and she told me she felt a great dread of being choked, and dying in a struggle for breath. But though she may suffer such paroxysms, they generally subside, and I told Emma I thought it would be God's will that she should die gently, just like her dear sister Lizzie."

There was one young visitor whom Emma loved very much. I cannot tell you much of what she used to say to her. But two or three days before Emma died, she took her hand and held it, saying, "Oh, Miss F., I am so very happy, so very happy! He

is such a kind Jesus. I can hardly speak, yet it seems as if I could not be silent. I must tell you how kind and loving the Lord Jesus is to me. It seems such a wonder I should ever be saved, but He is such a kind Jesus, able to save even me. He has taken away all my fear of going to hell, and all my sad thoughts. I am quite sure now that He died for me, and that I am going to him very soon." Emma's weary eyes closed, and she dozed a little while, still dreamily repeating, "Going to Him for ever,—to be—with Him,—how—how beautiful."

When she awoke, her watching friend kissed her sweet face. Emma took her hand again, saying, "I do love you very much, Miss Fanny. I wish you were coming to heaven with me now. I have always loved you, and I do not like leaving you behind, but you will come by and by. I am sure that Jesus loves us both." And then Emma whispered, "I was so very ill all last Saturday night, but it seemed as if the Lord Jesus came to me and made me so happy. And ever since He has kept me in perfect peace. He won't leave me again." F. then asked her what chapter she would like read. Emma chose the 14th chapter of St. John. Every verse seemed sweeter than honey to her, and she kept saying, "Oh that is sweet. Isn't that beautiful? Is not Jesus kind to leave such words for me?" Emma also spoke of the great dread she had felt of being choked when death came, adding, "But dear Mr. H. told me that I

need not fear, for he thought I should die very gently, like my own sister Lizzie died on mother's lap, whilst he was kneeling by her. I think the Lord must have put it into his heart to tell me so, for it gave me such comfort, and I have felt quite easy about dying ever since. I see now it will be like going to sleep—sleeping in Jesus.”

Over and over again Emma said, “God bless you, dear Miss Fanny, I do love you so. Good-bye.”

Emma's journey was nearly over. There was only one valley to pass through, and then she would reach the hill of Zion. We can watch her walking through the valley, but we cannot see her glad ascending of that holy hill, where now she rests for ever.

Sometimes the valley of death is very dark, and sometimes it is a lighted one, with only a soft shade resting on it. Just as if you were going to some beautiful mountain, you would have to pass through the valley first. If you set out early enough to reach it in daylight, the mountain would only softly shade the valley from the bright sunshine. But if you put off setting out, and so get to the valley at night, it would be a dark dark valley, with no light to show the way. There was a Sunday scholar who put off this journey to the beautiful hill of Zion. She was careless at school, whispering at church, and disobedient at home to her mother. Her teacher often begged her to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, and hear His kind voice, “Enter ye in at the strait gate.” But still she

walked on in the broad way of darkness and sin. So that dark walk brought her to the valley of death at night-time. Poor Ann! I stood by her bedside, and when her mother begged her to drink the medicine or she would die, she put her hands to her mouth and said, "I shan't." And then I saw her trembling with fear, so frightened to die. We begged her to pray to Jesus, but she said, "No! I don't want to pray, it is too late now." Nor would she listen to any reading of the Bible. The last words poor Ann kept saying were, "It is so dark, so dark; mother, mother, I am dying, and it's all dark; oh! I am going into the darkness!"

Oh, my children, will you, too, risk living in darkness, and dying in darkness? Will you risk putting off entering the narrow way? Will you risk getting to the valley of death, with no light to see the Shepherd-hand of Jesus; no ear to hear His voice saying, "Fear not, for I am with thee?" Will you risk seeing the dark, yet ever-burning pit opening for you at the end of the valley? Will you risk hearing Satan's lion-roar sounding nearer and nearer? Will you risk feeling, "It is too late to pray; I am lost for ever!" and then find yourself cast into outer darkness?

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John viii. 12.) "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have

light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." (John xii. 35, 36.)

When dear Emma reached this valley it was light. She was a child of light by closely following the Lord Jesus, the true, the only Light. He had Himself passed through this same valley of death. He found it dark, for there all the heavy clouds of our sin hid the light of His Father's countenance from Him. But as He there took all our sins away, so all the darkness passed away with them, and now His sin-forgiven children find it a lighted valley. Emma often said, "I fear no evil, for Thou art with me." "My heart and my flesh faileth me, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever." For many hours she lay dying, suffering much from convulsive pain, and struggles for breath. But still she smiled sweetly, and would just whisper, "Happy, so happy."

"Do you ask me for pleasure?
Come, lean on His breast,
For there the sin-laden
And weary find rest.
In the valley of death
You shall triumphing cry,
If this be called dying,
How pleasant to die!"

—M'CHEYNE.

Very often she said, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." She longed to be with Him, not that she might be out of her pain, but that she might be rid of sin, and see Him she loved face to face. If some one is coming to see you that you love

very much indeed, do you not ask, "What time will he come?" and will you not run to the gate, or look out of the window, to see if the carriage is in sight? Just so. Emma longed to see Him whom, having not seen, she loved, and she knew, too, that He was coming to fetch her to His own glad home, to stay with Him for ever. Her mother told me it was wonderful to hear how many hymns and texts she repeated. One which her dear pastor, Mr. Havergal, said to her, was often on her lips—

" Begone unbelief, my Saviour is near,
And for my relief will surely appear."

The last verse she said very often—

" Though painful at present,
'Twill cease before long ;
And then, oh how pleasant
The conqueror's song."

Shall Emma tell you what she found the Lord Jesus to be to her then? "Oh! He is such a *kind* Jesus, *so* kind, and then He is *my* kind Jesus!" And when Emma said this, she was in great bodily misery, all earthly kindness was nothing to her; even her kind mother could not help her now, and often she went out of the room, because she could not bear to see her darling child in such agony. But her "kind Jesus" was drawing nearer and nearer, and His Spirit brought words of comfort from His written word to her mind. And the same hand, which long ago He had held open for

the nails to be put in, and did not draw it back, was now holding Emma safely. "Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (John x. 28.)

Her mother saw that Emma was just going to leave her, and she whispered—

"My dearest child, are you happy?"

"Oh yes, mother dear, I only wish I had breath to tell you *how* happy I am."

After kissing her mother, she put her hands together, saying, "Happy, happy for ever—for ever with my kind Jesus!" Then she tried to say the verse—

"Though painful at present,
'Twill cease before long;
And then, oh, how pleasant,
The——."

But she did not finish that line, for she was really just going to begin that "conqueror's song," that would never end, to Him who had loved her, and had given her the victory. A few quiet breathings, one last smile, and Emma's spirit went away with that "kind Jesus," who would present her faultless before His Father's throne with exceeding joy.

May we not think of these two dear sisters, Lizzie and Emma, that they are together now among the spirits of the just made perfect, that together they behold His glory, that together they see their "kind, kind Jesus?"

Dear children, are you wishing to die like Emma and Lizzie, and be with them in heaven? Are you

wishing you too could say, "My kind Jesus?" Then pray that God the Holy Spirit will teach you the first lesson Emma learnt, "I have sinned, I am lost and helpless." Perhaps you have never felt at all unhappy, never felt yourself to be a sinful child, never felt you were going to hell, as Emma did. This shows you that your soul is dead, asleep, and in great danger. A dead child cannot feel; a sleeping child sees not the flames round its curtains. Will you not listen to the kind voice of Jesus, *calling* you once more ere you wake in hell for ever? "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (Eph. v. 14.)

Do cry as Emma did, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." Do ask and seek and knock as she did, that God will give you His Holy Spirit to open your eyes to "behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Then you will learn the same sweet lessons Emma did. You will *know* that the Lord Jesus has washed you in His precious blood. You will be quite sure that He loved you, and gave Himself for you. And you, too, will find out, as Emma did, how kind the Lord Jesus is. Every morning all your mercies will seem to drop out of His kind hand. As you walk along you will see His love in every bud and flower, and when you look at the far off blue sky you will think "There is my kind, kind Jesus." And then, too, you will feel that the Lord Jesus is always quite near to you; you shall find Him kind in watching you and keeping you from sin and

Satan—kind in settling every thing that happens to you all through life—kind in drawing your heart nearer and nearer to His own, and showing you His everlasting loving-kindness—kind in teaching you to know His voice, speaking to you by His Spirit in the word. In the valley of death you will find Him, your kind Shepherd, coming very near, and saying, “Fear not, for I am with thee.” And then what will it be *really* to see Him, and, amidst the songs and hallelujahs of heaven, to hear His own voice say, “It is I, your kind, kind Jesus!”

XI.

VISITS TO MEN.

WE have not many of these to record. A few stray gleanings from the deathbeds of those who are now in joy and felicity.

Among the occupants of Taylor's Lane Almshouses was Benbow Jones. He was a very happy old man, his lips overflowing with the grace of the present and the glory of the future.

He was fast sinking, or rather fast rising, to his rest. Asking him what he thought of Christ now, his answer was, "Precious, precious, precious! His boundless love fills my soul with joy unspeakable. I cannot utter the peace that pervades my soul. Here I am, waiting for His salvation. It's fifty or sixty years that I have known Him, and He will never, never leave me. He does not even let Satan buffet me. Let me tell you to keep close to Jesus; to whom else could you go? O precious Saviour! all Thy promises I have found to be Yea and Amen." His last Sunday came, he lay peacefully all the day,

often saying, "How glorious, how glorious!" His last words were, "Riches, riches, riches!"

"Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"

William Franklyn died in the Lord, aged sixty-six. The following dream is copied from his own writing. It happened when he was a young man, with no serious thoughts.

"I dreamt that Satan in human shape presented himself to me, and persuaded me to make away with my life. While thinking how I should put an end to myself, I looked on the right hand, and saw the Saviour clothed in white raiment. In an instant many precious promises of the Bible, which I had heedlessly learnt, seemed poured into my mind. Then I saw the glories of heaven, the company of angels, and I seemed to feast upon the glorious sight. It was as though I was out of the body, and the enjoyment, which I felt in that short space of time, seemed enough to repay me for all the sufferings of a lifetime. Then I seemed to return from this glorious sight to where Satan was still waiting for me. But during that time so much of the Bible seemed revealed to my mind that I was armed to reply to all that Satan said, and he had no power against me. He was in a great rage, and then showed me who he was. I saw on his left hand the bottomless pit, where was a great company, and their cries were beyond all

I had ever imagined of torment and misery. I saw many whom I formerly knew. Satan left me, and I woke."

It was only a dream, but it had the effect of leading him to study the "more sure word" of God, and henceforth he followed Christ. He used to call his bedroom "my study, for here I study for heaven." His Bible was well-worn. He carefully listened to the sermons at St. Nicholas, and told me, "It is wonderful how they all come back to my mind in the week. Your father's preaching takes me into the depths of God's Word."

The quiet attentive worshipper was missed from his seat in church one Sunday, for he was called to "dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

JOHN PACKMAN.

"Good morning, John; you look very ill to-day."

"Yes, Miss, I am weaker in body, but then I've no fear. My heart feels warm with the love of Christ. Sometimes, Miss, I wish I had more evidence that I am His child."

"The evidence is in His Word, John. You have just said that you love the Lord Jesus Christ, and here, in 1 John iv. 19, it says, 'We love Him, because He first loved us.' Listen to this hymn—

" ' And when I'm to die,
Receive me I'll cry ;
For Jesus hath loved me,
I cannot tell why.' "

John.—"That is sweet; would you write it down for me, please. Perhaps it's selfish to want more evidence in myself, it would take the credit from Christ."

"You are right, John, all the credit and all the glory of our salvation belongs to the Lord Jesus alone."

"Could you please to tell me, Miss, what happens when the soul leaves the body? I've been thinking much about it."

"We will look in your Bible, John. The Lord Jesus said to the dying thief, 'To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.' When Stephen was dying he saw the Lord Jesus, and cried, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' And St. Paul writes, 'Having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.' From these three verses we learn that the spirit is immediately received into the presence of the Lord Jesus, and that it is a conscious state of happiness, for it is 'far better.' If we love any one very much, it is just seeing them, consciously being with them, that we long for; and *the* joy of heaven is, that we 'shall be for ever with the Lord.'"


He turned to his young wife and little ones, saying, "These are my last care, but I can leave them all to God, He will provide."

John greatly valued my dear father's visits. How he felt his absence and illness shall be told from my dear mother's note-book:—

"While his people all rejoiced at his return,

none so welcomed him as the sick. I remember John Packman's saying how he had prayed to be spared to see his dear minister again on earth, adding 'Then I could die happy.' He was spared, and cried with joy on his first visit, saying, 'Now my prayer is answered. I believe the Lord will soon call me home.' John said he wanted to thank him for all he had taught him, and to tell him that he had brought him to Christ. At this time my dear husband was very far from well, and it was with the greatest risk that he went in a fly to see him. On the second visit John sent for all his relatives to come upstairs. He spoke earnestly and faithfully to them, telling them to listen to Mr. H.'s warnings in time, and not wait till sickness came. He then asked his minister if he thought he could live many hours, or if he might die before he could visit him again. He told him that most likely he would die before the morning light, and so it proved. When prayer was going to be offered, seeing that his father and brother would not stir, John said, 'Kneel; oh, do kneel, and pray now.' As Mr. H. left the room John lifted up his hands, blessing him, and cautioning all to listen to and follow him, for he was a holy man of God, and none like him.

"Some time after John's happy death, his grateful wife told what otherwise we should never have known. She said that Mr. Havergal noticed that her husband seemed to have some trouble on his mind, but could not find out what it was. 'When



we came downstairs Mr. H. asked me what John's trouble was. I showed him a heavy coal bill unpaid, that lay like a weight on John's mind. Mr. H. took and wrote his name on it, and said that he would pay it clear off. He went away. I ran up to show John, and when he saw 'W. H. H.' on the bill, he said, 'That is a God-sent thought, that was my last trouble; God bless that righteous man.' From that time I never heard him say anything but 'I shall soon reach my long and happy rest,' and 'Patience, heaven! patience, heaven!' It was just as Mr. H. said, he went to his rest before daylight came, saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'"

"MR. HILL THE CHURCHMAN."

This was the well-known name of the beadle of St. Nicholas Church some years ago. He was a remarkably handsome old man, and in his official costume of scarlet and black velvets was quite a picture. An artist's sketch of him still hangs in my father's study.

The outline of his consistent life shall be taken from part of the sermon preached the Sunday after his death, May 12, 1850, by Rev. W. H. Havergal. Psalm lxxxiv. 10, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

"What the original speaker of these words was willing to be, Richard Hill was. For thirty years

he was the doorkeeper of this house of God. He loved his office, because he loved his God. He was respected in it, and was a goodly ornament to it, for he was not only a handsome old man, but a good old man, and an everlasting instrument of good to many in this parish. A week ago he ended his office, and was taken, I doubt not, to a higher office in the better Temple above. There was nothing very extraordinary in the character of our venerable beadle, neither would I represent it as perfect. But there is enough in it to warrant his minister testifying his respect for him, and to present some parts of his character as eminently worthy of the imitation of you and of me. It is plain that a genuine love for the house of God must be grounded on a genuine love for God Himself, as well as every ordinance of His house, which is intended to draw us to Him, to make us like Him, and to comfort us in Him. Such love to God, and consequently such love to His house, was for many years the prevailing affection of our late beadle. It was, too, in this very house of God that the lamp of that affection was first, consciously to himself, kindled in his heart. The short-lived ministry of that excellent and venerated servant of Christ, the Rev. John Greig, was, as he told me, the means of arousing him to a sense of sin, and to a knowledge of the Saviour. But though he always attributed his spiritual conversion to the agency of Mr. Greig's preaching, he has frequently told me that, after Mr. Greig's death, he grew care-

less. He recollected many things to lament in his walk and conversation.

“It is plain from our text that the Psalmist, who was willing to be a doorkeeper in the house of his God, was not only a man of a loving heart, but of an humble spirit. He not only loved God as his God, but felt that it would be an honour and blessedness to serve Him in even the meanest capacity. He would rather be a doorkeeper in His house than excluded from it. Unless we feel a covenant interest in God, as our God in Christ Jesus the Saviour, we never shall have the heart to say what the Psalmist did. Think of a king being willing to leave his throne, and turn porter to the tabernacle, rather than never attend the tabernacle at all. Have we the faith, the love, the humility of the Psalmist? Eminently indeed is an humble spirit requisite for acceptable worship in the house of God. They whom He chooses, and causes to approach unto Him, are they who feel their infinite unworthiness of Him, and, as to their original position, their immeasurable distance from Him. ‘To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.’ (Isaiah lxvi. 2.)

“To our late beadle it was, of course, no humiliation to fill the office which he held, honourably to himself, and usefully to the parish. It appears that, on the erection of the galleries, Richard Hill was in a temporary way appointed to superintend admission to them. This was before 1820. He

was then, and had been for some years, one of the watchmen of the parish. At the beginning of that year he was violently assaulted by a party of ruffians, who all but deprived him of life. Compensation was made to him by the parish. In consequence of what he suffered in the service of the parish, and from being considered in every respect a fit and proper person, he was in 1820 appointed beadle of this church. From all that I can hear it has seldom been the lot of a man in his standing to be so generally approved and respected as he has been. He was a peaceful neighbour, and a pattern of a husband. All his fellow officials, too, very highly esteemed him.

“My friends, you who, in the providence of God, are called to perform duties of service, no matter of what degree, how honourable to the character of a man is it, for such things as these to be said of him when he ends his service, or ends his days! But what is of far greater consequence, how honourable is it to the religion of that God who has given him grace to persevere in well-doing unto the end. It matters little what is the state of life in which it pleases God to call us, so that we do but glorify Him in it. Adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, is said of servants especially, and not of Christians generally, as is frequently quoted from Titus ii. 9, 10.

But here I would acknowledge for him that he was fully sensible of many deficiencies and errors in himself. I have heard him complain of being too

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apt to mind others, without duly minding himself. To one individual, who said to him, when hearing a similar complaint, 'But, Hill, did you not love your Bible, and love going to church?' he replied, 'Oh, yes, but I did not make it my business. I always loved my church, and for these forty years have regularly attended it; but then, when service was over, it often was like done with, and my thoughts would go roving about.'

"But let us notice here that the Psalmist's love of God's house, the humility of his heart, and his hatred of wickedness, all originated in that spiritual renewal of his nature, which the Holy Ghost alone can accomplish. Left to ourselves, we never should love either God or His house; there would be no humility in our hearts, nor any holiness in our lives. To be otherwise than we originally are can be effected only by that Spirit, who is the sole source of grace and power to man. All good dispositions and desires proceed from the operations of God's Spirit. Accordingly, when a man loves the things of God, and finds his chief delight in them, it is because the Spirit of God has made him a new creature in Christ Jesus. Then it is that the word of God, the day of God, the house of God, become the meat and drink of the child of God. All these great changes and fruits of the Spirit gradually became more and more discernible in Richard Hill. He was visited with severe illnesses within the last dozen years, which seem to have been greatly blessed to him. In nothing was their effect more discernible

than in his constant and humble efforts to be a blessing to others. I speak advisedly in saying that, for many years, no man was a greater blessing to this parish than was its beadle, Richard Hill. He was the constant visitor of the sick poor. Long before the name Scripture-reader came into use, he was one. Making more minute inquiries since his death, I find fact upon fact to prove that he was the means of many a true conversion. Among other testimonies, old George Vaughan always attributed much to his visits. It was the occupation of his leisure hours to read and pray and converse with those who could not come to the house of God for instruction. He was generally known among our better sort of poor as 'Mr. Hill the Churchman.' And would that we had many more such Churchmen; men who will talk for their Church, and pray and live for their Church, in all the evangelical purity of its doctrine and sanctity of its discipline. But the religion of our door-keeper, 'the Churchman,' was not a mere Church religion, it was a vital heart religion, nourished by union to Christ, and thriving where it always ought to thrive, first and fairest, at home. After his second marriage he made a point to have family prayers, and this was made the beginning of great blessing to his wife. She died about six years ago. An eye and ear witness has told me that the manner in which he used to read to her and pray with her, during her last illness, was really beautiful as well as touching. She used to say, 'I ought to be the

happiest woman in the world, because I have the best husband in it. He cares for my soul, and leads me to heaven like a little child.'

"Oh, what a pattern is this to many a husband, and how well will it be for all husbands and all wives, even among the poor, to follow that part of it which relates to family prayer.

"Last year the good old man was attacked with alarming illness. A visitor remembers reading to him the 8th chapter of Romans. Pausing at the 6th verse, 'To be spiritually-minded is life and peace,' he said, 'Oh, that peace, I enjoy it now, and shall enjoy it for ever, for ever.' At the 15th verse he repeated, 'Abba Father, *my* blessed, blessed Father.' More than once I surely thought he was entering the valley of death, but the Lord and Giver of Life called him back from it, and spared him for another year. This was a most blessed season of spiritual growth to him.

"But ere I remark further respecting it, let me recur to a circumstance, which, though known to some, may be heard by all now, and possibly by one, whom of all others I could wish to hear it. One day while the aged sufferer was in a deep slumber from the effects of medicine, some heartless person slipped into his room and stole from his bolster all the money he possessed. The amount, about twelve or fifteen shillings, was soon made up to him; but his money was stolen. Not one living on the premises was suspected, but some one else was. Should that unhappy person be present, let

me tell him, that money will be as fire in his pocket, and let me exhort him, for his soul's sake, to repent him truly of his sin, and then to return the money either openly or secretly to myself, for the benefit of the little orphan daughter whom the sufferer has, with many anxious fears, left behind.

"The illness to which I have been referring was counted by him the greatest mercy of his life. Respecting it, he said, 'I desire never to forget the Lord's goodness in sending me that illness last summer. I seem as if I had wasted all my life before that; it looks like a barren vineyard. Oh, what a mercy that the Lord did not cut me down, such an unprofitable servant! Oh, how my sins rose up before me! For a few days and nights they seemed like flames burning me up, because I had been so vile and wicked before my God.' Yes, dear friends, it generally is the case that at some time or other true penitents, though they know their pardon in Christ Jesus, are taught to feel by God's Spirit, that sin is an evil and bitter thing.

"Another time he said to a visitor, who was leaving Worcester, 'I don't think I shall live to see you again, but as the Lord in heaven pleases, it will be best. My times are in His hands, and His blessed will be done. My race is nearly run. My pains are often very great, but never too great. It's best I should have them, they make me think of my sins and of Him who suffered for them on the cross. Oh, how can I ever thank him enough!'

"A relative just then came in; but such was the stream of his words that he seemed as if he could not stay from speaking of his Master, and of his longing desire to be made meet for his heavenly home. He added, 'I want to serve the Lord with all my heart, not to speak of any one else, only to win Christ and be found in Him.' In this way, and much more might be told you, did the Lord show that he was fast ripening His aged servant for the garner of His glory. He rallied sufficiently to do as he usually had done in the house of his God, but as he one Sunday said to me, it was under an impression that he should not do it much longer. And so it proved, the final attack of his malady came. He was conscious that the time of his departure was at hand. He had but one care on his dying bed, and that was for his little girl, the child of his old age. The thought of leaving her an orphan, only nine years old, and for whom he had nothing to leave but his blessing, did touch the heart of the kind old man. If any other heart should be touched for the child, I shall be but too glad to receive any offerings their hand can afford to bestow. As he lay gradually sinking, about three days before he died, it was said to him, 'Your flesh and heart are failing.' 'Yes, but the Lord is my portion, He supports me.' With clasped hands and bright smile he exclaimed, 'I am waiting for that joyful call, "come away, come away." Oh, how glorious for the Lord to bid me come up to Him from this world of sin and misery!'

"Far more might be told you, but let this suffice, for I cannot trust myself publicly to tell it."

But what the preacher did not say may now be written. Often did the old man speak of the pleasure and comfort the visits of this beloved pastor gave him. Blessing on blessing did he pour out for him and his family.

One day he pointed to a little round table, saying, "Oh, what a pleasure it is to me when Mr. Havergal kneels there, it's like heaven begun below, and that's where I've long knelt and felt my Saviour so near, He meets me there."

"Do you often feel the Lord's presence, Hill?"

"Oh, yes, He is always with me day and night. I've no fears now. Death can't fright me. I shall not be afraid to go this night. Blessed be His holy name, I know I shall drop into the Lord's hand. He has led me safely all through the wilderness, and I shall soon be safe in all His glory. Blessed be His name. He has washed all my sins away. All my trust is in Christ. He is my hope. He has drawn me to Him, how can I ever thank him enough for all He has done for me, a poor miserable sinner, I want to be always praising."

"Oh, what a blessed, blessed time it will be to meet my beloved Saviour, that shed His precious blood for such a vile sinner! It won't be long till He takes me to His glorious kingdom for ever. My strength and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever."

When he entered the last valley only the shadow

of death was there, and he saw the other side of shining light. And as he looked he said, "Oh, what a glorious ascent up that heavenly hill!" His parting words were a legacy of blessing, "The Lord bless my dear minister, and dear Mrs. H., and all his family; the Lord in heaven for evermore bless him. Amen, and Amen."

When the next Sabbath morning came, the door-keeper of God's earthly house ascended to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

He died, May 5, 1850, in the seventy-ninth year of his age.

Some time after his death the following letter was sent by his son to his valued teacher, Mrs. H. :—

"DEAR TEACHER,—It is almost with shame I take my pen in hand to answer your letter, after delaying it for so long a time. Methinks I shall never forget the sermon preached on my father's life and death by Mr. Havergal. Happy shall I be, when my existence is no more, to have the same tale told of me, as of my dear father. I assure you, teacher, it was a great trial to part with so good and kind a father. Never could any child have had a better father, and to part with him was almost heart-breaking. But yet, in the midst of all this trouble, there is consolation, for it is only for a time we have parted, if I can but take the same way and path he took, and our Saviour prepared for us to walk in. I suppose my little sister will enter the school next Sunday. I hope she will be a good child.

for myself a little, as she
 in the wicked world with-
 out look to Him, who is
 — please to send me word
 Remember me to all
 I do hope they will
 I wish I had
 I would not found out
 disgrace, when I
 Tell them not to
 as my boy I have s.
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XII.

HARRY THE HAPPY.

"WHERE shall you be set down, ma'am?" said the porter, as he shut the door of our cab at a busy railway station.

"At the Union Workhouse, please."

On arriving there, the doorkeeper looked at our order for admission to see Joseph Henry Ford in the male bedridden ward.

He asked, "Have you anything about you to take him?"

"Yes, here are some mince pies, and a bag of apples and oranges."

With a kind smile the man unwillingly added, "But, ladies, have you any wine or spirits?"

"Oh, no; I am a teetotaler."

"All right, Miss. Will you sit down in the waiting-room, as it is my duty to ask the master's leave for your bag to go in?"

He soon returned with permission. We followed him through a large hall, strewn with faded evergreens and paper decorations now taken down, as

Christmas time was past. He left us as we entered the men's ward.

It was spacious and lofty, almost like the nave of a church, with a double row of iron pillars. Down the centre of the room a wooden partition divided four parallel rows of iron bedsteads. There were about seventy beds, and, as in the porches of Bethesda, "In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered." And He, who is still "moved with compassion," sees them lie, and knows how long they have been in that case.

The friend who accompanied me had long known, and often visited, Harry Ford. His letters to her had interested me so much, that I had occasionally written to him, and friends had sent through me stamps, and books, and tracts. Passing between the long rows of beds, I should certainly have stopped at his without my friend's saying, "This is Harry." That happy face, that peaceful smile, that hand on an open Bible—that was "Harry the Happy."

While my friend talked to him, I looked at Harry's surroundings. Suffering faces and uncurtained beds were seen; groans here, impatient words there, and incoherent ravings from a man past his hundredth year, were heard. No fireside corner, no high-backed chair and patchwork cushion, no purring cat, no singing kettle, no black tea-pot, no tray with two cups and saucers, no wife to look at, gray-haired and wrinkled, yet dearer than even

when the promise was made, "to love and to cherish, till death us do part." "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder," seems unheeded by Poor-Law legislators. The only echoes left of home are the click, click of the clock, and the chiming of Sunday bells. Still, in justice, it must be admitted that the beds were clean and comfortable, and the ward well warmed by hot water pipes and thoroughly ventilated. The quality of the food was good; the sameness of diet the only complaint. Who would not tire of fat mutton every day, and tea made in a copper?

At the head of every bed, were some shelves for their few books and belongings. Harry produced from his a pot of workhouse marmalade.

"This is the way to make the most of an orange, Miss! I cut it, rind and all, in very thin slices, put it in a jar with a little water and a sprinkle of sugar, and then a spoonful quiets my cough in the night."

"How did you keep Christmas, Harry?"

He opened his Bible, and laid his hand on it, saying, "*I had this.*"

"Did you see any holly or ivy?"

"No Miss, I heard there was some in the hall, but none came in here."

"See I have brought you some, Harry, and I will tie it round the iron pillar. Flowers are scarce now, so I could only get a nosegay of herbs. I gathered some thyme, marjoram, and sage; perhaps

you remember them growing in your mother's garden?"

"Well, now, that is kind! I haven't seen a bit of sage for years, that is homelike!"

"But please, Miss, to look at what I made for my Christmas decoration. Last summer you sent me a sprig of cedar, myrtle, box, and a passion flower. They often brought His word to my mind, 'He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.' 'Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree.'

"I dried them all, and here they are tied round this little paper garland. We are not allowed nails, but the master kindly allowed me one to hang it over my bed, and the picture you sent me of the mission room on Wyre Hill. That picture gives me work to do, praying work for all the people who go there. I try to do some little work for the Lord here; when my breath allows me, I read aloud to the poor men. Only a few care for it. It is one of my great trials, the bad language I hear, and their carelessness about their souls; not a thought about eternity. There was a dreadful death only last week. A man was always cursing and swearing; one night he was cursing till he went to sleep, and in the morning was found dead in his bed. It made me feel His amazing grace to me, to call me out of darkness into His marvellous light."

"And are you generally happy, Harry?"

"Oh, yes, though sometimes not quite so bright

as others, but then I always have the witness of the Spirit within that I am a child of God, that I am an heir of God, a joint-heir with Christ.

"No words can express the happiness which flows from this."

"Have you any visitors; Harry, besides kind Miss B.?"

"Yes, a few, and our chaplain is a very kind man, and has such a beautiful voice, he has just been reading and praying in the ward."

"Are you fond of music, Harry?"

"Very; years ago I played fairly on the violin."

"I will lend you this musical box, Harry; my sister brought it me from Switzerland to please the poor sick people I visit. I hope to come again in a month, and you shall keep it till then."

"Oh, thank you! I have heard no music since I came in here."

"Are you suffering much, Harry?"

"I am quite helpless from the dislocation of my hip, and I always suffer more or less with bronchitis."

"Would you like this warm comforter and these muffatees Miss B. has knitted for you?"

"No, thank you, I must not take them; for we have orders to take off any bit of flannel for the night, and I should only miss them then."

So unwillingly we brought them away.

Just then a singular incident occurred; an old man in the next bed, hearing me addressed by name, called out, "Havigail, Havigail; why, that

was the name of our parson years ago, he turned the parish upside down. *He* was the man as could preach, and put a stop to sin !”

We were soon friends and talking over old times and places, and the good seed my dear father sowed nearly fifty years ago. The old man proved to be the son of Betty Dalley, and brother of our worthy Astley schoolmistress. He spoke of Harry as his best friend in the ward, and that he had led him to seek the Shepherd from whom he had gone far astray.

It was now time to leave the ward. A friend had supplied me with five shillings for Harry. I laid it in his hand. Tears were his answer, and then, “Oh, the goodness of my God! I can only pray for this unknown friend.”

Harry’s history shall now be given, as related in his letters to my friend and myself. They are faithfully copied, the spelling being singularly correct.

TO MISS B——.

“*MALE BED-RIDDEN WARD,*
Midnight, 1868.”

“DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIEND,—I promised to send you a few lines, and now all being still, is a good time for me to write. We always have the gas on at night, which makes it comfortable, as I can read when I am awake, the gas being nearly over my head. I often think of you and all others when

you are fast asleep. Oh, what a blessing it is that our poor body is watched over, when the image of death is on us. These are the seasons for me, when all is quiet and still, surrounded as I am by those who, like myself, are often racked with strong pains, and have no kind friends to converse with and comfort us. You would think such times very hard, and so it is, as far as earthly comforters go. It is sweet to hear the voice of a friend at your bedside, and receive a little nourishing food, such as the poor body often requires.

“But how much more sweet to hear the voice of our Best Friend calling us to listen to Him, to hear His word of consolation, and to receive from Him food for our precious souls, and His promise assuring us that He will soon come for us and take us to Himself. There we shall be for ever free from all pain and sorrow, and live for ever in the realms of glory. All our pains will be over, we shall have no more restless nights or troublesome days; all will be one clear everlasting day, a day we shall ever spend in praise and glory to Him who liveth and reigneth for ever, ever. The Lord in mercy look down on the poor dear souls, who are at this time led away by the spirit of Popery. It is a time for us to look up and pray for the ingathering of the flock, that we may see the Church of Christ flourish and become strong,—that we may see the strongholds of Satan broken down and scattered to the winds, that we may see those who are now in the way to hell, brought to walk in the way to

glory. Dear friend, receive the following lines from your poor pensioner. It is many a day since I have done such before, and now all being still, I thought you might be a little pleased with poor Harry, although I do not pride myself, or think myself at all clever for all that.

"These lines, my friend, I now indite,
Although it is past twelve at night,
I mean the enemy to fight,
While on my way to glory.

"My captain Jesus on ahead,
Who rose triumphant from the dead ;
By Him alone my soul is led,
To win my way to glory.

"All hail, our Jesus, glorious name !
Who always was and is the same,
Who from heaven to earth once came,
To raise our souls to glory.

"Rejoice, my friends, we will obey
This heavenly call from day to day,
And for our fellow-creatures pray,
That they may seek for glory.

"Oh, that we may live to see
Many to our Saviour flee,
Escape eternal misery,
And seek for endless glory.

"Our time on earth may not be long,
Oh, may we join the blood-bought throng ;
And learn to sing the heavenly song,
The saints now sing in glory.

"J. H. FORD."

To Miss B——.

“DEAR FRIEND,—. . . I will now tell you a little of my history. I was born near Penzance ; the Rev. C. De Le Grice was our clergyman. My happy lot was to be blest with pious parents, and they did all that lay in their power to set a good example to their family. We had the Scripture read, and family worship twice every day. Very often, when my beloved father went to his room, he would take me with him, and there he prayed for us. I remember well his tears and prayers when sad tidings have been brought of the death of a brother in a foreign land, and then again of another, and another. We were thirteen in family ; I was the youngest, and a great favourite with all my brothers and sisters. I had many advantages given me to become, what we may call, a good boy, and so become a good man ; but, like most other children, I was sometimes rather too self-willed, and no doubt had too much of my own way ; yet I always loved my parents most dearly, and my brothers and sisters. To pass by my childhood, when about eleven years of age, I wanted to go to sea, as all my brothers were sailors, and I wanted to see foreign countries as they did. Nothing would do for me, but to sea I would go. At last I was permitted to go a voyage with a dear friend of my father's. It was Christmas time, and they hoped the winter voyage would sicken me ; instead of that it made me more hardened, and I liked it well. But

then I was only cabin boy, and knew nothing of the dangers to come. Years rolled on, and many were the dangers I had to encounter. I often thought of my parents, and prayed the Lord to preserve me to see them again. I knew they were praying for me and my brothers. I remembered well how my dear father would always pray for all who 'go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters.' Now my parents had many and heavy troubles. First, I had one brother who fell from the mast, and was all but dead when taken up. He lived about six months in an hospital—this happened in America. Another brother fell and was killed, never spoke, but was taken up dead—that was in Sydney, New South Wales. There was about two years between these troubles, then two sisters died, about five and six years old. Another poor brother had his skull broken by a stone thrown by a bricklayer; it was not intended, but it hit him, and he only lived a few weeks. A few months after another brother was ripped up by a wild cow. Here was sorrow upon sorrow. My dear parents and two sisters were almost heart-broken, yet all bowed and said, 'The Lord's will be done.' I was young and felt it much, but it soon went off; I was among sailors, and had no time to grieve. After a few years a dear brother, eighteen years of age, and six of the crew, were all drowned. Here was another heavy trial; and scarcely got over, when a brother, a dear pious one, died with the yellow fever in Africa. Then my

dear father was laid down with a paralytic stroke, and my dear mother suffered from the tic doloieux. She often lost her reason; but, even when raging, would cry, 'Patience, patience, Jesus, Jesus!' She died; and such a happy end! For several days all her pains left her, and we, who saw her, could rejoice with her, and rejoice when she went to her Father and our Father. But I should have told you of myself being broken up before this. My dear mother was alive when I was hurt, (fell from the mast and broke the thigh, and other injuries); and, dear soul, how she did take me round the neck and kiss me, and oh, the agony she was in for me. When my bones were set, she came to me to nourish and comfort me. After my dear mother's death my sisters died one by one, only father and me left together; at last poor father died, and here am I left alone; (no, I should not have said so), I am not alone, I have a friend or two left, you know; but, above all, I have a Friend round about me, One who is with me at all times. He cares for me asleep and awake.

"And now let me say, with a joyful heart, with praise to my great Deliverer, 'Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.' (Psalm cxlix.) And I am on my bed singing praise in my heart to the Lord. For the present, dear friend, adieu.—Yours, &c.,

"J. H. F."

To MISS H——.

“DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST,—... You wish to know about my conversion. I had dear pious parents, they did all they could to bring us all up in the fear of the Lord; their prayers and tears are fulfilled, I humbly hope, in my being led to put my whole trust in Christ for my salvation. I was, as all poor sinners, going the downward road to destruction. I think my first conviction of being a sinner lost for ever was thirty-four years since, when on a voyage to India, and crossing the line; it thundered, lightened, rained, and blew so tremendous, that I trembled greatly. I went below and thought, Well, I cannot escape to a place of safety. I prayed the Lord to look on me and help me to put my trust in Him, to deliver us from the storm, and bring us in safety to the land again. I remember I lost all my fear and trembling, and felt such a calm within as I cannot describe.

“We lost our mizen mast and fore yard, the sails were split, and there was much damage, but we arrived safe to land. The Lord be praised for all His mercies in preserving me in the midst of storms and dangers on the deep, and His watchful and tender care in withholding me from the many snares laid for me by those who professed to be my friends on the land. I have had strong temptations to follow the thoughtless and gay to places of amusement, and to such places as I would not mention, but thank God for His watchful care in

keeping me from the snares of the wicked. At that time I was looking more at my good works, than at the finished work of the Lord Jesus. Up to the age of twenty-three or four I was a self-righteous Pharisee. I was in London, and at a chapel, but I do not know the name, nor did I ever inquire, but I heard a sermon from the 21st verse of the thirtieth chapter of Isaiah, 'This is the way, walk ye in it.' I was led from that time to search the Bible more, and pray for the Lord's blessing and His Spirit to direct and lead me in the right way, till, at length, I was enabled to cast all my care on Him, who, by His own almighty arm, 'brought salvation, and of the people there was none with Him.' So it pleased God to reveal Christ in me as the only hope of glory. May the happiness of our souls daily arise from the Holy Spirit revealing Christ unto us. My cough is very troublesome to me at times, but the Lord be praised for enabling me to bear His chastisement, and may I, through grace, be kept by His almighty power to His everlasting kingdom. The Lord bless and comfort you all, and may it please Him to prosper His work in your hands. You may work for a long time before you find that which you desire. But be not discouraged, you will find your labour is not in vain, the Lord in His own time will own and bless His work. Go on, and fear not the enemy, he is chained, he cannot harm thee, the Lord is with thee to bless. May the comfortable communion of the blessed Spirit lead us daily to

praise and glorify our heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen. I remain, your humble servant and well-wisher,

“J. H. F.”

To MISS H——.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—With much pleasure I send you these few lines, with my sincere thanks for your kind present, and especially the books and your sister’s hymns. I do not know which delights me most. ‘Faith and Reason’ is very good. ‘All Your Need’ is truly delightful. I can say, from experience, the Lord has supplied all my need so far through life, and I doubt not but He ever will supply me out of the fulness of His treasures. The riches of His grace are inexhaustible, His promises shall all be fulfilled in due time. Often when I knew not how I was to get a morsel of bread, and knew not where to go, I have felt sick at heart, and have been afraid to make my wants known to any one, the Lord has been my guide to direct me to the place where I have found relief. I will just tell you an instance. Some four or five years since, one Tuesday afternoon, after I had been all the morning going from street to street, calling from door to door, but could sell nothing, I felt very weak and tired. I sat down to rest me, with my box by my side, full of thought. A lady, with a little boy, passed by. I heard the child say, ‘Oh, mamma, look at that poor man!’ I looked up,

and, a few yards off, I saw them stopping, and then the dear child came running to me with sixpence. I was then in Highfield Road. Here was a supply for me; there was threepence for my lodgings, and threepence for some bread and tea. Then I called at one house in that road, it was No. 17, and I was asked into the kitchen. Shortly the lady came to me, and two of her little daughters. I was ordered something to eat, and the cook was ordered to give me the remainder to take with me, so that I had bread and meat for two days, and two shillings to put in my pocket. I need not tell you what I felt at having such a present, and my thanks to Him who directed my steps to that door in particular. So have I ever found the Lord to supply all my need in all temporals, and I am sure He will also bestow on me all I need for my comfort in all my affliction. He will not leave me comfortless, He will be with me in all my sickness to cheer me, and raise my weary, sinking spirits by sweetly smiling and saying, 'It is I, be not afraid; I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' Many times I have found it hard. I have left my lodgings in a morning and gone for two or three miles without selling anything, and have been a whole day and not sold a pennyworth, yet I never despaired. I knew well the Lord would provide. I did all I could, and then was sure the Lord would send me relief from some quarter, and I always found it. I could tell of the many times I called on a dear friend ever ready to help me, but

I feared to put too much on her good nature, but she always gave me sufficient for my present wants. So the dear Lord provided me with all my need from day to day ; and what more do I want ? Why, I am in want daily. I want to be in all things more and more like my Jesus. I want to lay my head on His breast, to give this poor heart to Him, to look to Him daily, hourly, and abide by Him truly and faithfully unto the end, looking forward for the time of my departure, when He shall take me to the mansions on high. I was pleased with the 'Passion Flower,' and 'Myrtle,' and 'Cedar,' you sent me, and have made these few lines.— Believe me, with Christian respects, yours in the Lord,

J. H. F.

"THE PASSION FLOWER.

" When I beheld the passion flower,
I thought upon the solemn hour
When on the ground Christ prostrate lay,
And prayed in such great agony.
He to His Father thus did say,
'Let this cup from me pass away ;'
Yet 'not my will, but thine be done.'
So said God's well-beloved Son.
Oh, garden of Gethsemane !
Often may I be found in thee,
Led by the Spirit to adore
Him, who the sin of sinners bore ;
Oh may I often there be found,
With Christ who lay upon the ground ;
By grace, through faith, believing see
He drank the passion cup for me !

"J. H. F."

TO MISS B——.

“MALE BED-RIDDEN WARD.

“DEAR FRIEND,—With a thankful heart I now write these few lines thanking you for your great kindness in remembering me, one who has not the least claim on you, that you should be so very kind. It is the Lord’s doing, to Him be all the praise for His putting it into your heart to give me a part of your substance, to enable me to get a few little things I should not have here, but for His love in remembering me through you. I am much better than when you last heard from me, I take no medicine, nothing but what I get in from out. Some candied horehound with a few biscuits, and have had a few smoked herrings, with a bit of ham now and then. When your letter came to me I was without any stamps, and out of all, so I see the hand of our Lord in it. ‘I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.’

“Oh, the heart, the heart, the wicked evil heart, if left for a moment to itself, what a conflict, how soon the dark clouds spread themselves abroad and cast down the poor soul, if but for a moment our dear Friend hides his face from us! When it pleaseth the Lord to dispel the dark clouds and shine forth again, what rejoicing once more, and a fresh supply of grace to waft us onward to our heavenly home! You will remember giving me a little book, about three years since, ‘Sunlight in the Heart.’ There are some nice lines in it—

'The gloomiest soul is not all gloom,
The saddest heart is not all sadness ;
And sweetly o'er the darkest doom
There shines some lingering beam of gladness.'

"As you say, the work of grace is all His own, so all the comforts we receive are from the Lord. His ways in dealing with us are mysterious, we are not able to comprehend His ways; but this we know, all things are working for our everlasting good. As the poet says—

'Though dark be my way,
Since He is my guide,
'Tis mine to obey,
'Tis His to provide ;
Though cisterns be broken
And creatures all fail,
The word He has spoken
Shall surely prevail.'

"Dear friend and sister in Christ, He will never leave us, He will for ever keep us near Him ; 'as the Father loveth me, even so have I loved you.' May we be kept by His Holy Spirit, and strengthened by His love, to walk in His ways, and at last hear His heavenly voice saying, 'Come up higher.' The Lord bless you in all your works and ways, and go with you to bless you in your mission of love to poor sinners, and comfort your heart at all times. Remember me in your prayers, and the Lord hear you at all times, and may all we do be to the glory of His holy name. Amen.—Yours in Christ,

"J. H. F."

To Miss B——.

“DEAR FRIEND,— I have suffered much in body, the pains have been severe from my head to my toes, oh, such pain! But our Father enabled me to bear all without a murmur or so much as a groan, no not so much as to disturb those next to me; although they knew I was not well, they little thought what I was enduring at the time. Dear friend, what cause of rejoicing and thankfulness, I could scarcely think it possible for one to feel such acute pains and be so quiet and peaceful, but what cannot our dear Father perform? I have been recovering these last two or three days, but am very weak and cannot sit upright yet, but hope I may *if it so please my Heavenly Nurse*, who has made my bed in all my affliction, and is by me to comfort me by night and by day. This is a very trying month to me. It is no use asking the doctor to alter my diet (fat mutton); I have heard many ask him, but he has never done it. I hope my good friend Mrs. B. is better; may the Lord give her patience to endure her affliction, knowing it shall all work for good. Not one pang more or less than is our lot to bear, and then, oh, then, the perfect joy to be felt for everlasting! No more pain or sighing, no more grief, no, nothing but everlasting joys and felicity, for ever enjoying the smiles of our risen Lord and Saviour. Dear friend, may the Lord bless and comfort you all with His holy presence, and give both you and me to taste more of His love day by day;

may we be kept by His almighty power, and may His Holy Spirit ever keep our minds in peace. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all. Amen, Amen.—Yours in Christ,

“J. H. F.”

To MISS B——.

“DEAR FRIEND,—I was happy to hear from you, and truly thankful for the supply of stamps, although I was not run out of the last I received from you. But the joy I ever feel to have a line from you I cannot express. I am not now as I once was, I cannot go up to the house of God to hear His word and worship with His people, and I have no one but yourself to send me a word of encouragement by the way, so that a line from you cheers my poor heart. Often do I long for the postman’s voice about the beginning of the month, not for the sake of receiving any amount of stamps to get me a few little things for the poor body, but to think and feel I am not alone in the world, that I have a few dear friends who are led to take an interest in me. It is a blessed truth indeed, ‘by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.’ ‘Love is the fulfilling of the law.’ What is more pleasing to parents, than to see their children living together in love? May we through grace be led to pray for one another, that we may grow in grace, and see and hear of the work of the Lord prospering in the churches. I trust the Lord will enable me to pray daily, for all who go

forth on errands of love to poor souls, that they may be refreshed by His presence, and the work of the Lord abundantly prosper in their hands. We have no strength of our own, we can do nothing of ourselves, but in Him all fulness dwells. Christ must be our all. Be not discouraged, my dear friend, you also will reap a joyful harvest. Look up! you are labouring for a good Master, go on with your labour, and when it is finished, He will call you to Him and give you your wages. I am as well in body as I could expect. I am slowly decaying, my flesh is going off me, there will be enough for the worms to devour; never mind the poor body, I rejoice in hope of a glorious resurrection, when body and soul will be reunited to live for ever in the kingdom of glory.

“J. H. F.”

To MISS H——.

“DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIEND,—My dear friend Miss B. has been to see me, and it refreshed me. I see the goodness of the Lord in giving me kind friends to cheer me by the way. I am alone in the world, that is, I have no relative to send or to come to me; my only cousins are in China and Australia. But I have Christ to commune with, and He is pleased to give me a few of His own dear children to minister to my little wants, such as I should not have in this workhouse.

“On the 6th of September last, the postman brought me an envelope; inside there was half a

sheet of blank paper, with half-a-crown's worth of stamps and the little book, 'Mountains of bread.' I am not so poor as Ann, who had no bread or money to get any on the coming day. My bread is sure, yet it brought to my mind the word of our dear and heavenly Father, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' 'Bread shall be given thee, and thy water shall be sure.' I know nothing of the friend who sent it me, the post-mark is Wolverhampton, but I know no one there, and none of my kind friends have been there. The Lord knows, and may He bless the giver abundantly in their soul, and bring them at last to live with Him for ever. Dear friend, it makes me very sad, when I look around me here, to see so many on their beds, and not one do I ever hear inquiring, What shall I do to be saved? I hear them often blaspheme that holy name, and when I speak to them about it, I am abused and am called a fanatic, hypocrite, and all kind of names. I bear it all with patience, and pray for them when they are asleep. You told me you see hundreds every day going the broad way; I know it must depress your spirit, but still hold fast the plough. Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but God giveth the increase. Yesterday a man here died suddenly, and never did I hear him once say, 'Lord, have mercy on me.' Certainly we do not know the thoughts of men, but it is a solemn thing to think of. Another poor fellow, who has laid on the bed next to mine ever since I have been in this ward, died on Saturday. He had been

paralysed, and could not speak. He was fearfully convulsed, and his struggles at the last were fearful. I hope I shall never witness the like again. I am still a poor sinner, and have nothing to trust to but my Saviour, and what more do I want, nothing, nothing! having Him I possess all. I have the promise of everlasting life, and 'He is faithful that promised,' and will also perform. Let us rejoice, and endeavour in all our conversation to praise and glorify our Saviour Christ, helping and assisting each other in our prayers, that the Spirit of our Father may be our guide while travelling through life, and be our great support in the last moment. Then to be conveyed to mansions prepared for us in glory. I told the wardman last night, if he should be here and see me die, to say, 'There lies a poor sinner, who died believing in Christ, and trusting alone in the atonement made by Him. Oh, the love of God to us poor sinners, and the obedience of Christ to the will of the Father, to lay down His life for us, while we were sinning against Him! How great His love no tongue can tell, then let us love Him, with all our heart, and soul, and strength. May the blessing of the three-one Jehovah be with us evermore.—I remain, your brother in Christ,

"J. H. F."

"*P.S.*—Let us pray earnestly for the Lord to uphold the church in these awful troublesome times. May He strengthen and cause His dear ministers to fight boldly in the strength of the Lord, and take

the devil by his horns and throw him overboard, that he may swim back to the pope and tell him he can do nothing in old England. I think of His mercy in delivering me from the power of darkness, how great His love to me a poor atom of earth, a weak worthless worm. I send you some verses I made on 'The Tree,' and 'The Beggar;' there are so many better able than me, that I feel ashamed to send them, but trust they will please you.

"J. H. FORD."

Harry's hymns are given untouched. Less perfect rhyme and rhythm may be found in the writings of some recognised poets.

Harry had but One Teacher. "Who teacheth like Him?"

THE TREE.

"O fruitful tree, beneath whose shade
I sit me down to rest;
No beast of prey can near me come,
Although they oft molest.

"Its branches spread both far and wide,
It shelters all who come;
Millions are now beneath its boughs,
And still there yet is room.

"This tree is beautiful and fair,
We all may freely eat;
The King's command is, 'Give to all,'
'Tis his delight to treat.

"Beneath the shadow of this tree,
I rest me day and night;
In eating of its goodly fruit,
Is my poor soul's delight.

"If once you taste this precious fruit,
Your soul will crave for more ;
Oh, come, dear friends, and freely eat,
Come now, both rich and poor.

"Ye naked, come, just as ye are,
It matters not how vile ;
The Master of the fruit will greet
You with a loving smile.

"Come, lame and blind, all in distress,
Shelter beneath this tree ;
You there will find a sure relief,
From all your misery.

"JOSEPH HENRY FORD."

THE BEGGAR.

"I go a begging every day,
I want to get a store ;
I do feel such a craving,
I'm always wanting more.

"Who would not be a beggar
To get a little food,
When he is sure of something,
That something very good.

"For my own part I wonder
Why some do feel so shy,
And rather than go beg a bit,
Would sooner pine and die.

"I'm not like that, but tell ye
I love to beg my bit,
And many a rich morsel
I oftentimes do get.

HARRY THE HAPPY.

"Why should not others join me?
I saw no reason why,
There is enough for every one
If they would only try.

"I go to beg of Jesus,
The starving sinner's Friend,
He always does my wants supply,
And will do to the end.

"I know He will give nothing
But what is good indeed,
To all who come unto Him,
And tell Him what they need.

"Oh, come, no longer look so sad,
Come, knock at mercy's door;
Ask, and receive His precious gift,
As thousands have before.

"The lovely Jesus bids thee come,
He waits thy soul to bless,
Come and be clothed, as all His Saints,
In perfect righteousness.

"J. H. F."

ONCE AND NO MORE.

"Once and no more the Saviour bled,
Once and no more His blood was shed;
Once Jesus suffered on the tree
To save such guilty souls as me.

"Once did He bow His sacred head,
Once was He numbered with the dead,
He rose again triumphantly,
And lives and offers life to me.

“ Rejoice, my soul, though wretched, vile,
Thy Saviour deigns on thee to smile,
And loving saith, ‘ Come unto me,’
And have at once salvation free.

“ True, once the sacrifice was made,
That once the debt of sin was paid ;
My captive soul was then set free,
And so I had my liberty.

“ This is good news to all below,
News that should make our hearts o’erflow
With love and gratitude to God,
Who sealed our pardon with His blood.

“ J. H. F.”

WHY CHRIST DIED.

“ Do you ask the reason why
Jesus Christ came down to die,
Why He left His Father’s throne,
Why He left His heavenly home,
Why He took our nature up,
Why He drank the bitter cup,
Why He to His Father cried,
Why on Calvary He died,
Why He in the tomb did lie,
Why He rose and went on high,
Why He sits at God’s right hand
In yon bright and happy land ?
Listen, dear friends, God’s Word doth tell
It was to save our souls from hell ;
That we might live with Him above,
And be partakers of His love.
This then is the reason why
Jesus Christ came down to die.

“ J. H. F.”

" I went unto my Jesus, and told Him all my grief,
He looked and smiled upon me, and came to my relief ;
He bid me come when hungry, and not to stop away,
' O come and drink when thirsty,' I know I hear Him say.

" Then let me live on Jesus, the true and living Bread,
Drink from the flowing fountain, for Jesus is the Head ;
O may I live on Jesus, and blossom as the rose,
And flourish as the lily, that in the valley grows.

" J. H. F."

TO THE MISSION ON WYRE HILL.

" I often turn my head and see
A little picture sent to me,
And think of those who oft repair
To offer praise, and worship there.

" The Mission Room on Wyre Hill
May God in His rich mercy fill
With praying souls, saved by His grace
Out of the once lost, ruined race.

" My heart responds with those who meet
To welcome you to Jesu's feet,
And train you in the narrow way
That leads to everlasting day.

" May those dear souls who do attend,
Find there the sinner's dearest Friend,
Jesus, who died on Calvary,
To save and set the guilty free.

" Ye who are poor and in distress
Come and exchange your ragged dress,
Throw off your filthy rags straightway ;
Wash and be clean without delay.

" My fellow sinner, only think
How near you are unto the brink
Of the great world of mystery,
Where you and I shall shortly be.

" If you 've not thought, begin to-day ;
For life to Jesus, haste away ;
He loves to hear the sinner cry,
He bids you come, why will you die ?

" Now, come, my friends, and do not fear,
You'll find a kindly welcome there ;
He'll clothe you, feed you, give you rest,
And number you among the blest.

" Farewell, my friends on Wyre Hill,
May God your Mission room well fill,
And spare your lives to bless the day
You first met there to praise and pray.

"JOSEPH HENRY FORD,
Bed-ridden Ward."

" As eagles on the rocks do build
And rise toward the sun,
So may we build on Christ the Rock,
The strong and holy One.

" The eagle keeps the sun in view
As she doth upward fly ;
So may we keep our Jesus Christ
In faith's aspiring eye.

"J. H. F."

"Dear Lamb of God, how great Thy love
 To leave Thy shining courts above,
 To ransom such a worm as I
 When by the law condemned to die ;
 When my destruction seemed so near
 In my behalf Thou didst appear ;
 Stern justice Thou didst satisfy,
 And set my soul at liberty ;
 My Jesus did to me draw near,
 And bid my soul be of good cheer ;
 I need not therefore be dismayed,
 He says, 'Tis I, be not afraid !'
 His Holy Spirit is my guide,
 My wants by Him are all supplied ;
 No gift or grace will He withhold,
 So doth His word to me unfold ;
 He near me is from day to day,
 And strengthens me upon the way ;
 Then shall I not contented be
 Since Christ is such a Friend to me !
 The hour will shortly come when I
 Shall see Him coming down the sky ;
 Then freed from all my deadly foes,
 Secure from sin and all its woes,
 Shall mount aloft and ever be
 With Christ to all eternity !

"J. H. F."

THE STAR.

"There shall come a star out of Jacob."—NUMBERS xiv. 17.

"Nahali Nahali" the guiding star
 That shone upon the earth,
 The wave the herald angel came
 And told of Jesus' birth.

"A manger was the lowly cot
Of heaven's brightest gem,
Behold, my soul, in that bright star
The Babe of Bethlehem !

"O blessed morn that star appeared
And brought the news to men !
That holy Child that was to come
Was born in Bethlehem.

"But now He reigns in heaven so high,
The King of kings is He ;
All nations of the earth shall soon
Before Him bow the knee.

"That glorious star that shone so bright
Now guides us on our way
That leads to heaven, our resting-place
Of bright eternal day.

"Jesus, be Thou my guiding star,
In all I say or do ;
Let all my conversation prove
I am a Christian true.

"O let no glittering star of earth
Delude my soul from Thee,
Or wicked thoughts disturb my mind ;
Be Thou my all to me.

"And when my course is run below,
Then may I joyful rise,
And see that once bright glorious star
In heaven beyond the skies.

"There to behold Him on the throne
In starry majesty,
And join to sing His praises there
To all eternity.

December 25.

"J. H. F."

HASTY YET HAPPY.

"Is will I comfort thee."

"O Lord! in my relief draw nigh,
And hear to my humble cry;
My soul, my all, I yield to Thee;
Come, holy Jesu, comfort me!"

"Where'er temptations me assail
Let them not / or me prevail;
Thou Thou the wily tempter shew,
And let Thy Spirit comfort me."

"When gloomy thoughts within me rise,
And bid Thy presence from my eyes,
Inspire the given and let me see
Thou still art near to comfort me."

"I faint, I weary, need Thy care
To guide me while I sojourn here;
O guard my soul, and ever be
A constant comforter to me."

"When through the vale of death I go,
Protect me from the daring foe;
I there shall stand in need of Thee
To be a comforter to me."

"Then when my spirit takes its flight
To the bright world of heavenly light;
There shall I ever worship Thee,
Who dost on earth "so comfort me!"

"J. H. F."

"Remember me."

"I nothing have, I nothing am,
My all I draw from Thee;
Thou dear atoning, bleeding Lamb,
In love remember me."

“ While on my bed I helpless lie,
Whate'er my lot may be,
Still this shall ever be my cry,
Dear Lord, remember me.

“ My sins they are a heavy sum,
I do confess to Thee ;
The Spirit and the Bride say, Come !
O then remember me !

“ Whate'er may be my future state
I leave, O Lord, to Thee ;
I still will knock at mercy's gate,
And cry, 'Remember me.'

“J. H. F.”

“Search me.”

“ Am I in earnest, O my God,
In seeking Thy dear face ?
And do I earnestly look up
To Thee and pray for grace,
To keep me in the narrow way
That leads my soul to Thee,
And strive with all my soul and might
From every sin to flee ?
O search my heart, and try me, Lord ;
What is amiss forgive,
And send Thy Holy Spirit down ;
Thy grace unto me give.
O let me not deceive myself,
Nor trust my treacherous heart,
But look to Jesus Christ alone,
Who takes the sinner's part.
O let me daily walk with Thee,
Rejoicing in Thy love,
And patient wait till Thou shalt say,
Come live with me above.

“J. H. F.”

"Ye are of more value than many sparrows."

"The pretty little sparrows, which
I see in yonder trees,
Not one can fall unto the ground
Unless the Father please.

"Thou, O my soul, more value art
Than many sparrows be,
For Jesus Christ hath told thee so,
As in His word we see.

"The very hairs upon thy head
All numbered are by Him,
And every thought that's in thy heart,
Yea, all that dwells within.

"All that I think, or say, or do,
Is open to His sight ;
Nought can escape His watchful eye,
In day or darkest night.

"O let me then be careful how
I spend my time while here,
That all I think, or say, or do,
Be done with godly fear."

"Fight the good fight of faith."—1 TIM. vi. 12.

"I'm on the battle field,
My foes stand thick around ;
I must not, dare not, yield,
But firmly stand my ground.

"Though weak, yet I am strong,
Made so by grace divine ;
I know, too, that ere long,
The victory will be mine.

"The Lord is my defence,
To shield me from the foe ;
'Tis He will drive him hence,
Down to the shades below.

"I think how Jesus bled,
To cleanse my soul from sin,
And by that blood He shed,
The victory I shall win.

"Then when the battle's o'er,
I shall have rest and peace ;
For ever, evermore,
My joy will never cease.

"Farewell, farewell to all,
My glass will soon run down ;
Then shall I hear His call,
To wear the conqueror's crown.

"Angels and saints will be
My loved companions there,
I shall my Jesus see,
And in His glory share.

"Oh, haste that happy day,
My Jesus, heavenly King,
When I shall be alway
With Thee in heaven shut in.

"J. H. F."

"Thy mercies, O my God,
Demand a song from me ;
But for my Saviour's blood,
Oh, whither could I flee ?

"Jesus, no name but thine
Could free my soul from sin ;
Sweet Spirit, all divine,
Come, make me pure within.

HARRY THE HAPPY.

"Thou hast prepared Thy throne,
High in the heavens above ;
And reignest King thereon,
Thou God of endless love.

"Oh, let Thy Spirit come,
And dwell within my heart ;
Bid evil thoughts begone,
And wickedness depart.

"Then shall my soul look up,
And praise Thy holy name,
And take salvation's cup,
With praises for the same.

"My soul, my all I give,
With cheerfulness to Thee ;
Who died that I might live,
In heaven Thy face to see.

"J. H. F."

AS YOU GO.

"Fear not, 'tis thy Beloved's voice,
He calls and bids thee to rejoice,
In Christ God put thy sins away,
And he upholds thee every day,
As you go.

"Oh, thou loved one, be not weary,
Tho' the road be rough and dreary ;
Onward press in Jesu's name,
And His matchless love proclaim,
As you go.

"Stay not, nor cast a look behind,
Keep thy Beloved in thy mind ;
The way with diligence pursue,
And ever keep His cross in view,
As you go.

“Fear not Satan or his roaring,
Let thy mind be upward soaring
To the blest haven of repose,
Though earth and hell thy way oppose,
As you go.

“Oh, thou loved one, be not weary,
Can the road be rough and dreary ?
Is not thy Beloved near thee,
By the way to guide and cheer thee,
As you go ?

“Put away all fear and sorrow,
Do not tarry till to-morrow,
Now’s the time thy love to show,
To Him who loves thee here below,
As you go.

“When time with thee shall be no more,
And thou shalt land on yonder shore ;
Peace, love, and joy, and lasting rest,
Will be thy portion with the blest,
Where you go.

"J. H. F."

MY BIRTHDAY, AGE 54.

"Through Thee have I been holden up ever since I was born." -

PSALM lxi. 5.

“Awake, my soul, this morn to praise,
My Saviour, Christ the Lord ;
With joyful heart thy voice now raise,
And Jesus be adored.

**“Angels now listen while I sing,
This little song of praise
To Christ my Saviour, Priest, and King.
In low and humble lays.**

"The sweetest name that e'er was known,
The loveliest and the best,
Now pleads before His Father's throne,
For all His people's rest.

"He shed His blood, oh, wondrous love !
He died that I should live,
To praise Him in His courts above,
And glory to Him give.

"Praise Him, ye saints that dwell on earth,
And I will praise Him too ;
With joyful heart and holy mirth,
I'll sing His praise below.

"We all can sing and say much more,
Than angels ever could ;
For on the cross our sins He bore,
And cleansed us by His blood.

"Oh, rich, oh, precious blood divine,
Power-speaking blood to me ;
To beautify this soul of mine,
Thine shed on Calvary.

"Praise, praise to God's beloved Son,
All praise to Him be given ;
Praise to the holy Three in one,
All praise in earth and heaven.

Alleluia !

March 14th, 1870.

"J. H. F."

Only once more have I seen Harry. He was asleep when I went to his bedside, but soon roused. It was Saturday afternoon, and it was pleasant to see clean towels and handkerchiefs brought round to

each patient. All had on a flannel dressing-gown, and the room was comfortably warm.

He told me he had begun reading Genesis with the New Year. That morning he had read the 49th chapter. He said, "When I read the 25th verse, 'Joseph is a fruitful bough, from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel,' Christ darted into my heart in a way I cannot express. I had been searching for Christ all through Joseph's history, the type is so clearly of Him. I had often read this chapter, but never till this morning did I find it sweeter than honey.

"No one can tell what this sweetness is but those in whom Christ dwells, and to whom the Holy Spirit reveals it. I can't find words to express my happiness in Him.

"Sometimes I get a gloomy hour, but not often; and as light is sweeter after darkness, day brighter after night, so I find the shining of God's countenance after a withdrawal.

"I am often amazed that He, the great and Almighty God, should manifest Himself to me, a speck, an atom, just sinful dust and ashes. It is such marvellous love, so boundless, that throughout eternity it will be exhaustless."

"Do you remember sending me some of your verses, Harry? Would you have any objection to my printing some of them? God might bless them, if we prayed it might be for His glory."

Harry.—"Print my poor things? certainly I never had such a thought, never! But if He

would bless my poor pen, oh, I should so like to fetch Him a little glory."

"Let us think and pray about it, Harry; bring your hymns like Mary brought her alabaster box to Jesu's feet.

"Now tell me how you liked the musical box?"

"Oh, it *has* been a treat! Every evening I wound it up, and all in the ward would be quiet then, and liked it so much. Here it is, quite safe."

"I have brought you this glass harmonicon, Harry, and a cheap concertina, it only cost one shilling and sixpence, but I thought you might like it, as you said you were fond of music. I wonder if you would like a flute better?"

"I have no breath for that now, Miss, but when I was a lad many's the time I've taken my flute and violin to bed with me, and woke the house with it in the morning. I used to copy out scores of anthems and chants; your father's name was well known to me as a musician. I should like to have some notes of his music here. I can tell anything by note."

"Worcester Chant" was well known to Harry, and so we sang it softly together. His last remark was in answer to this question, "What does music suggest to you, Harry?"

"That for which there is no comparison, the voice of the Lord Jesus in His word, in this Bible, *that* is living music now. But no earthly music can compare or give any idea of that which ear hath not heard. Music will be the voice of the

Lord Jesus, and I shall hear it in the Upper Temple,
in the Holy of Holies."

Verily he is, "Harry the Happy."

"Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his
help; whose hope is in the Lord his God."

GOD MY COMPANION.

"Oh, may I daily walk with God,
And be submissive to His rod,
And daily wash in Jesu's blood,
With God for my Companion.

"Since I from sin and Satan flee,
And Jesu's blood was shed for me;
How can I then unhappy be,
With God my true Companion ?

"When with my heart to Him I cry,
He doth my every want supply,
And no good thing will He deny;
He is my best Companion.

"Should friends forsake me in distress,
He will not leave me comfortless;
With humble joy I do confess,
He is my sole Companion.

"The powers of hell I need not fear,
Although with hellish rage they tear;
My God is ever by and near,
Oh, what a great Companion !

"And when through death's dark vale I go,
The river threatening to o'erflow,
I shall in safety be led through,
By Him, my dear Companion.

"When landed on that heavenly shore,
Where sin and sorrow are no more,
To meet with those that went before,
And there, with my Companion,

"What everlasting songs of praise,
In that blest place our hearts will raise,
Through never, never ending days,
To God our great Companion !

"JOSEPH HENRY FORD,
Bed-ridden Ward."

THE END.

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the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are employed in the public sector has increased by 1.5 million, from 2.5 million in 1980 to 4 million in 1995. The public sector has become a major employer in the UK, and its growth has been a major factor in the overall growth of the economy.

The public sector has also become a major employer of women. In 1980, women made up 40% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this had increased to 50%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of women in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people with disabilities. In 1980, people with disabilities made up 1% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this had increased to 3%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people with disabilities in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from ethnic minorities. In 1980, people from ethnic minorities made up 2% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this had increased to 5%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from ethnic minorities in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people who are over 50 years of age. In 1980, people over 50 years of age made up 10% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this had increased to 15%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people over 50 years of age in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people who are under 25 years of age. In 1980, people under 25 years of age made up 5% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this had increased to 10%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people under 25 years of age in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people who are part-time workers. In 1980, part-time workers made up 10% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this had increased to 20%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of part-time workers in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people who are self-employed. In 1980, self-employed people made up 5% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this had increased to 10%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of self-employed people in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people who are employed on a temporary basis. In 1980, temporary workers made up 5% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this had increased to 10%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of temporary workers in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.